THURSDAY
April 9, 2026

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
18 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

Vol. 57 • No. 84

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

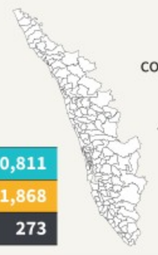
To subscribe, give a missed call at 9828331787 or scan QR code

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

Mandate today

Two States and one Union Territory are heading to elections in a single phase on April 9.

KERALA



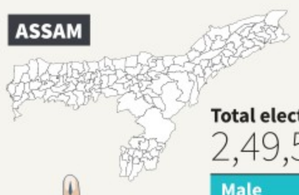
Total electors
2,71,42,952

Male	1,32,20,811
Female	1,39,21,868
Third gender	273

Assembly constituencies 140

Polling stations 30,471

ASSAM



Assembly constituencies 126

Total electors
2,49,58,139

Male	1,24,82,213
Female	1,24,75,583
Third gender	343

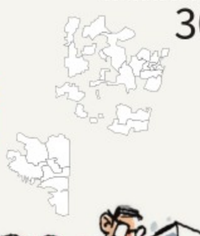
Polling stations 31,486

PUDUCHERRY

Assembly constituencies 30

Total electors
9,50,311

Male	4,46,361
Female	5,03,810
Third gender	140



Polling stations 1,099

Fragile U.S.-Iran truce kicks in

Each side offers divergent accounts of its terms; Tehran initially agrees to safe passage through Strait of Hormuz but stops vessels later, accusing Tel Aviv of ceasefire violation as Israeli strikes kill 112 in Lebanon; Islamabad to host talks tomorrow

Stanly Johny

The two-week ceasefire announced by the U.S. and Iran hung in the balance on Wednesday with each side offering divergent accounts of its terms and Israel launching one of its heaviest air strikes on Lebanon since the war began, drawing swift accusations from Tehran of truce violation.

On Wednesday morning, U.S. President Donald Trump said he has "suspended the bombing of Iran" for two weeks and will begin talks with Tehran based on its 10-point proposal, provided Iran reopens the Strait of Hormuz. Iran said it will halt strikes if U.S.-Israeli attacks stop and promised safe passage through the strait in coordination with its forces during the truce. Pakistan, which mediated between the two sides, said all parties and their allies have agreed to an immediate ceasefire on all fronts, including Lebanon, and Islamabad will host direct talks on April 10.

However, Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who welcomed the U.S.-Israel ceasefire, said Lebanon was not part of the deal. Israel then stepped up air strikes on more than 100 targets in Lebanon, killing at least 112 people. Iran's Fars news agency said oil vessels passing through the Strait of Hormuz have been stopped because of Israel's "ceasefire violation".

Mr. Trump said earlier in the day that he was suspending his planned attack on Iran based on conversations with Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir. "This will be a double sided ceasefire! The reason for doing so is that we have already met and exceeded all Military objectives, and are very far along with a definitive Agreement concerning Longterm peace with Iran, and peace in the Middle East [West Asia]," he added.

The U.S. had earlier sent a 15-point ceasefire proposal to Iran through Pakistan, which Tehran rejected. Instead, it submitted a 10-point proposal demanding the lifting of all sanctions and continued control over the Strait of Hormuz, according to Iran's state media.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

RELATED REPORTS ON » PAGE 14

Temporary relief: Iranians react after the ceasefire announcement at the Enqelab Square in Tehran on Wednesday. AFP

India welcomes move, calls for trade via Strait

NEW DELHI
The Indian government on Wednesday welcomed the U.S.-Iran ceasefire agreement that was brokered by Pakistan close to the deadline, calling for an early end to the conflict and for "unimpeded" trade flow through the Strait of Hormuz. » PAGE 10

Shippers seek clarity before transiting

CHENNAI
Shippers are awaiting clarity on the terms of exit from the Strait of Hormuz following the ceasefire. Some 35 stranded ships are either Indian-flagged or foreign-flagged carrying cargo for India. They await "clearance from the Indian government". » PAGE 13

NEARBY

Groundwater extraction in State sees a dip

BENGALURU
Karnataka has recorded a significant decline in groundwater usage falong with a notable increase in annual recharge capacity, reflecting the impact of sustained water conservation efforts and good rainfall. » PAGE 6

II PUC results to be announced at 3 p.m. today

BENGALURU
The results of the 2026 II PUC annual exam-1 will be announced on Thursday at 3 p.m. Students can access their results through the official website: https://karresults.nic.in and also via the KarnatakaOne Mobile App. » PAGE 2

MGNREGA: Centre yet to approve labour budget; workers await work in State

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

While workers in Karnataka have registered and are seeking employment under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the Centre is yet to approve labour budget for the State for 2026-27, even though the financial year has begun. The delay has left many without work during the peak pre-monsoon season.

Though Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Grameen) Act, 2025, has replaced MGNREGA, it is yet to be rolled out.

Under MGNREGA, households first register and obtain job cards and are then required to submit demands for work, either at the gram panchayat or through the online system. Panchayats then allocate and initiate specific works based on the approved labour budget. Until the Centre approves the budget, panchayats cannot start new works. Only the first two steps can be taken.

As on April 8, of the 5,958 gram panchayats in the State, 4,869 reported 'zero expenditure' under the job scheme. FILE PHOTO

Nil expenditure

As on April 8, of the 5,958 gram panchayats in the State, 4,869 reported "zero expenditure", indicating that no new work has been initiated this financial year across 81% of the local bodies which are primary implementing units for MGNREGA. The remaining 1,089 panchayats have recorded minimal expenditure. The expenses, however, appear to be linked to spillover works from the previous financial years.

"This is that time of the year when we depend most on MGNREGA," Ramesh K., a worker from Chincholi, Kalaburagi, who is awaiting work under the scheme, said, explaining that after the harvest, there is not much agricultural work available. "The monsoon has not started yet, so this gap is where income becomes uncertain. The income from MGNREGA helps us to buy seeds and fertilizer for the next crop, and handle small debts," Mr. Ramesh added.

"If work is not given now, we have to wait until October or November. By June, the monsoon begins, and most of the work under the scheme cannot be taken up in heavy rains," said Muniraj M., explaining that after that, agricultural activity picks up again.

Form 6 not available

Many workers also said that submitting a demand for work itself has become nearly impossible. While some said they are unable to do it online, others said when they approach gram panchayats, they are not being given 'Form 6', which is required to submit while demanding work.

"From past few months, Form 6 is not being given. Officials, however, are not telling us why, but some say new forms under VB-G RAM G were expected, and no work could be offered until they arrive," said Mahantappa K., a seasonal agricultural worker from Anantapur in Belagavi.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 7

15-year-old goes missing in Chikkamagaluru

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

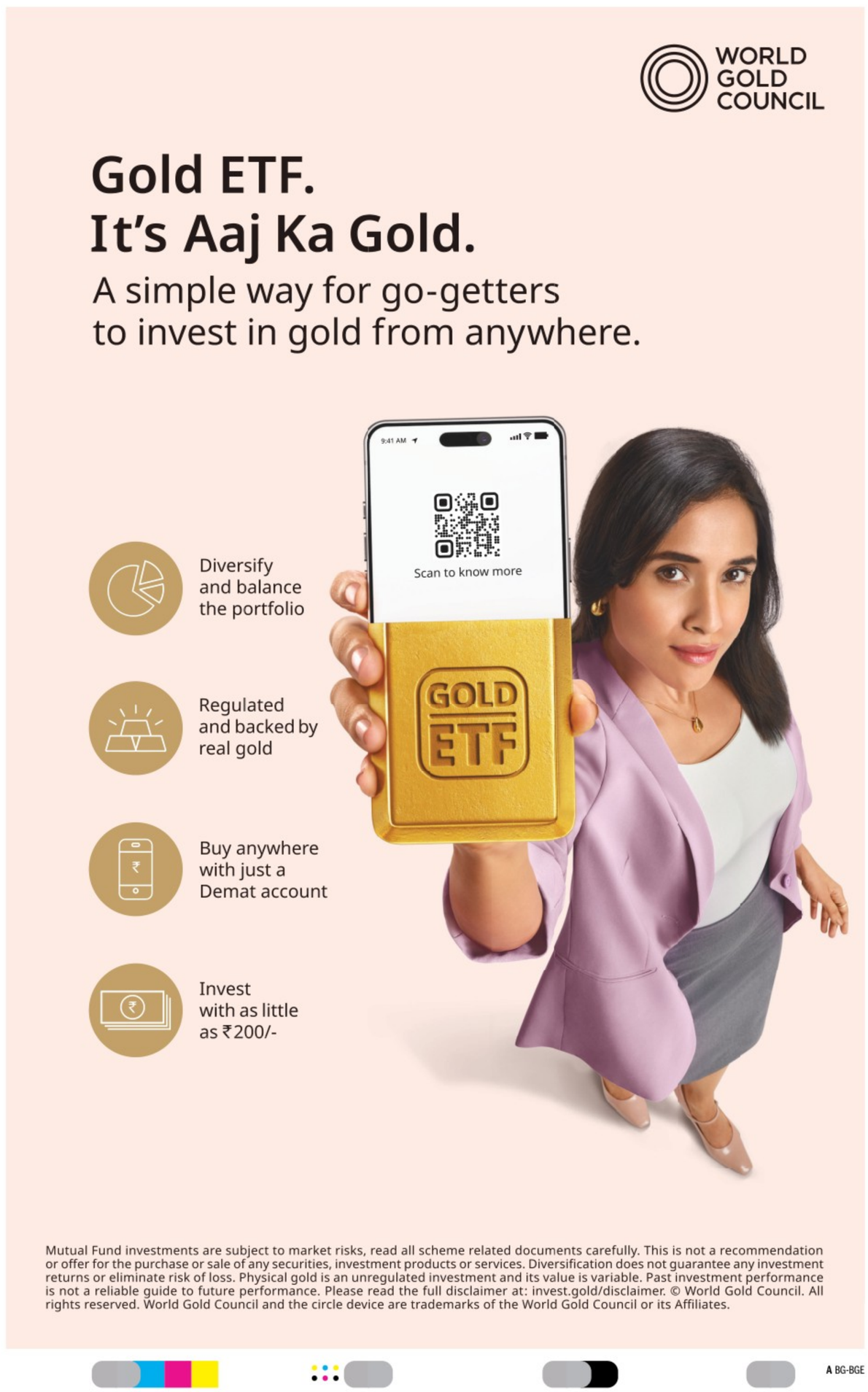
Days after a Kerala trekker was safely rescued in Kodagu after spending four days alone in a forest, a 15-year-old girl from Palakkad in Kerala has been reported missing during a visit to Chikkamagaluru in Karnataka. Search operations continued till late in the evening on Wednesday.

The girl was on a trip to Chikkamagaluru along with her family members. She reportedly went missing near Manikyadhara, a popular waterfall in Bababudangiri Hills.

The girl was part of a family group that was on a visit to Manikyadhara. Around 6 p.m. on April 7, the family members noticed that the girl was missing. They searched for her around the place and informed the police outpost around 8.30 p.m. The police, with the help of Forest Department officials searched for the girl, using a thermal drone, in the hill station throughout the night.

They resumed the search operations on Wednesday and continued till late in the evening. Meanwhile, Chikkamagaluru Rural Police registered a missing complaint based on the statement by her parents. According to the police, there were more than 100 people at the tourist spot, when the family members realised that the girl was missing. The police are investigating the case in all angles. There are no CCTV cameras installed at the spot.

Jitendra Kumar Dayama, SP of Chikkamagaluru, said that combing operations were conducted in the locality along with the forest staff. They used thermal drones. However, there was no clue about the girl's presence. A team of State Disaster Response Force also joined the search operations on Wednesday.



There will be expectations, but I am focusing on my work

Representing Capitals in his maiden IPL, Nabi, who was the toast of the 2025-26 domestic season as J & K won the Ranji for the first time, will test himself in the world's biggest T20 league after he was roped in by the franchise for ₹8.4 crore; the medium-pacer from Baramulla opens up on the challenge ahead and the domestic season just gone by

INTERVIEW

Auqib Nabi

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

For the best part of two years now, Jammu & Kashmir's Auqib Nabi has compelled the domestic cricket landscape in India to take notice of his talent with eye-popping exploits in the First Class circuit. Thrust a new red ball into his right hand and Nabi, shy and reticent otherwise, invariably makes it talk, luring seasoned batters into his trap with subtle changes in his wrist position. For evidence, look no further than his dismissals of K.L. Rahul and Karun Nair in Karnataka's first innings of the 2025-26 Ranji Trophy final.

It is owing to this precious skill that Nabi has been at the vanguard of J&K's headline-grabbing performances recently. In an epochal 2025-26 Ranji season that witnessed the northern side break free from the shackles of history and lift the crown for the first time, Nabi's display – he effected 60 dismissals in 10 matches – was the piece de resistance. The medium-pacer pacer from Baramulla was no less influential in the preceding season, claiming 44 wickets in J&K's run to the quarters – it was a one-run first-innings deficit against Kerala that agonisingly hindered the Paras Dogra-led outfit from marching ahead. As irresistible as Nabi has been in India's premier First Class competition, it is a sign of the times that a broader endorsement of his ability will readily come if he can cut it in the Indian Premier League over the next two months. His style may not be as suitable to the white-ball game, but he did scalp 15 wickets in seven games for J&K in the last Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy – the domestic T20 meet –at a creditable economy rate of 7.41 runs per over.

Having been acquired by Delhi Capitals for ₹8.4 crore in the mini-auction last December, the expectations are high from Nabi's maiden IPL season. Before the summer show-piece got underway, the 29-year-old sat down with the media over a *Zoom call* and responded to numerous queries about his first IPL gig and his stunning exploits for J&K. Edited excerpts:

Nabi... on a sizzling run.
K. MURALI KUMAR

You like setting up batters in First Class cricket. In T20s, the time to make an impact as a bowler is limited. What will you look to hold onto from the red-ball game in the shortest format?

My go-to plan, regardless of the format I'm playing in, is to keep things simple. I don't like to overthink and complicate things too much. That is my mindset.

In the past, you have been a net bowler in the IPL. How were those experiences?

I was a net bowler with 2-3 different franchises (Sunrisers Hyderabad, Gujarat Titans and Kolkata Knight Riders). Talking to international players and taking feedback on how to improve, it was a very good experience.

How are you planning to deal with the pressure of expectations in the IPL?

Obviously, there will be expectations. But I am focusing on my work, and not giving a lot of attention to the things that are being said. I am focusing more on my preparation and how I can do well in this format to help win matches for Delhi Capitals.

You have excelled in domestic cricket for J&K. This is your first IPL season. What will be the biggest difference between the other domestic competitions and IPL?

The margin of error is less in the IPL. Domestic cricket is also at a good level, but in the IPL, you won't expect to get away with a lot of mistakes. It is about the margin of error. That is the difference between the IPL and domestic cricket.

You are from Baramulla district in Kashmir. What were the challenges in the journey from there to the IPL?

Nothing was too difficult as such. It is just that we lacked infrastructure in J&K. There weren't good turf wickets in the region for training and preparation.

Things are gradually getting better. I just had to use the limited facilities and resources to the best of my ability, and prepare accordingly.

Your IPL stint with Delhi Capitals has been highly anticipated. Personally, what are your goals for this season?

My strength is that I swing the new ball. At the back end, in T20s, you need yorkers and slower balls. I am working on that with coaches. I won't veer away from my strengths and I will keep things simple. Whenever I play in any tournament, my goal is to finish as the highest wicket-taker. Hopefully, my contributions can help DC win the title.

If getting selected for India is the ultimate goal, how important is the IPL in fulfilling that desire?

It will be very important. The tournament is watched around the world. The competition is very good. For red-ball selection, I have performed well in domestic cricket. I am not thinking too much about India selection. I am doing the things that are in my control, and not focusing on external factors. Obviously, playing for India is the ultimate goal. It will be a dream-come-true. But for now, my focus is to do well in this IPL.

DC engaged in a bidding war and secured your services for ₹8.4 crore. What is your take on the price tag?

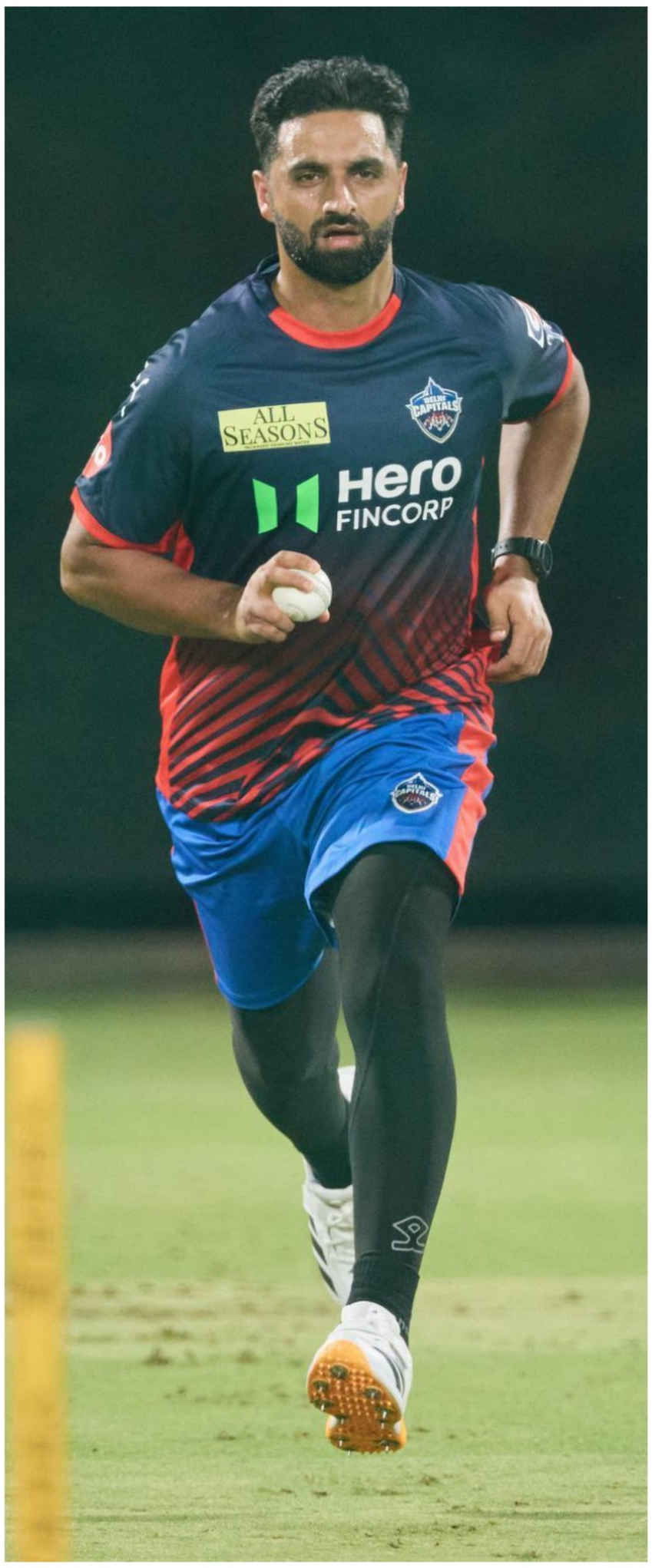
It wasn't about the money. I wanted to play once in the IPL, even if I got just ₹30 lakh. Obviously it felt good that Delhi Capitals invested so much money. My strength is to swing the new ball both ways. My focus will be on doing that and getting wickets up front.

The price tag won't play on my mind. I just wanted to play at this level and prove that I am good enough. Pressure will be there, but I am not focusing on the outside noise.

What was the day of the IPL auction like? Can you recall the emotions you went through?

I was at home on the day of the auction. The camp for the Vijay Hazare Trophy was going to start on the next day. Everyone at home became emotional, because it has taken so many years of hard work. Everyone's dream was for me to play at a higher level. Looking at their reactions, I also became emotional. I hadn't told any of my friends or other people in the area that I was at home. But a crowd gathered outside my house, and everyone was dancing with joy. It felt good to witness all of that.

> Mindset-wise, I was thinking a lot about results earlier. For the last 2-3 years, I have not been thinking about results. I have been concentrating on following my process. I have been positive



You are also known to hit a long ball with the bat in hand. How much focus are you placing on improving your batting?

I have always been working on my batting. I have been batting a lot in the nets since coming into this set-up, and talking with the coaches here on how I can make myself better. If I can contribute with the bat as well, it will be very good for myself and the team.

Reflecting on J&K's Ranji win, what sort of impact do you envisage it having on cricket in the region?

It will have a big impact. Earlier, other teams used to think they could beat J&K inside two days. Things have changed now. There weren't role models to look up to in the past because the results weren't coming. There were no trophies. Now, parents have begun supporting kids playing cricket because they can foresee a bright career in the sport. We've won the Ranji Trophy. There are guys from J&K playing in the IPL and for India. We are competing with the best teams in the country. So, it will have a positive impact. Infrastructure will also become good with time.

How has life changed for you since the IPL auction?

I have just been playing cricket regularly since the auction. I have expectations from myself that I have to do well at this level. I have been doing well till now. Everyone expects you to keep doing well. That is it. I can't see any changes as such.

You made your Ranji debut in January 2020, but it took you until the 2024-25 season to make a substantial impact. What changes did you make in the last two years?

There were things that I worked on with the coaches. Two-three years ago, the Jammu & Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA) did not have a bowling coach for the team. You don't know what you are doing wrong when there is no (bowling) coach. The bowling coach can point out small things, and that can make a big difference. That has helped.

Mindset-wise, I was thinking a lot about results earlier. For the last 2-3 years, I have not been thinking about results. I have been concentrating on following my process. I have been positive and that has been the secret to my success.

What is the most challenging part of bowling in T20s?

I need to improve my death-bowling in T20s. That is something I need to focus on in the shortest format.

Is there any particular bowler that you idolise?

Growing up, I used to watch Dale Steyn a lot. I used to copy his bowling action. From the time I started playing professionally, I have tended to watch the videos of all bowlers, and observe how different bowlers operate in different conditions and situations. You get to learn from everyone.

You have been very complimentary of the role that J&K bowling coach P. Krishnakumar has played in your development. What are you looking to learn from DC bowling coach Munaf Patel?

In all the conversations we have had so far, Munaf bhai is very chill. He has just told me to continue doing what I have been doing to be successful. He wants me to not tweak things. He has told me to be positive. There hasn't been a lot of stress on technical aspects. I am very excited about working with him going forward too.

Before the auction, you attended DC's trials. Did you sense during the trials itself that you would get an opportunity to play in the IPL?

In the trials at DC, I spoke to all the coaches. They all had a positive response and told me that they were looking at me. If the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy went well, I felt I could get a chance in the IPL.

> From the time I started playing professionally, I have tended to watch the videos of all bowlers, and observe how different bowlers operate in different conditions and situations

Vatal Nagaraj arrested amid high drama in a 5-year-old protest case

It is a travesty that such a petty case is being dragged on for so long by the government, says Kannada activist

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Senior Kannada activist and former MLA Vatal Nagaraj was arrested by the Basaveshwaranagar police from his residence in Dollar's Colony amidst high drama on Wednesday.

This was following a warrant issued by the 42nd Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate court in connection with a case over a protest dating back to 2021.

"I had sat on a protest in front of the then Education Minister S. Suresh Kumar, demanding that all SSLC students be passed that year without exams, due to the pandemic. I was even wearing a mask. Police filed an FIR against me for that protest and it has dragged on till now. Despite Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's assurance on November 1, 2025 that all cases against Kannada activists will be withdrawn, this case is proof that it is not yet the case," Mr. Nagaraj told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Nagaraj had applied for exemption from personal appearance to the hearing twice and third time the court rejected the plea. Following legal proceedings, the court issued a warrant against him, leading to his arrest on Wednesday.

Vatal Nagaraj sat on a protest in front of the then Education Minister S. Suresh Kumar, demanding that all SSLC students be passed that year without exams, due to the pandemic. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"The police came to my house armed with a search warrant, which is a first for me in a career spanning over five decades. Since I myself was available, there was no point in carrying out a search. But the police officer who came to my house started reading it from his phone. I insisted on a print out. Later I found it was in English and demanded that the warrant be served to me in Kannada, which they did not," he said.

He was eventually detained and as he was brought out, Mr. Nagaraj refused to sit in the police jeep. "The police said I have to sit in the back and not in the front, which I refused. They eventually took me in an autorickshaw they hired," he said. During the hearing, the court reportedly asked him to pay a fine for which he contended that he would challenge the order in the higher court. The court allowed his plea and posted the next hearing to April 30.

> The police came to my house armed with a search warrant, which is a first for me in a career spanning over five decades
>
> **VATAL NAGARAJ**
> Kannada activist and former MLA

"It is a travesty that such a petty case is being dragged on for so long by the government and even after five years, the case is still going on and I was arrested. The case may eventually lead to a fine of ₹1,400, my advocates tell me," Mr. Nagaraj lamented.

State to hold Campus to Career Summit in city on May 15 and 16

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The State government will hold a one-of-its-kind "Campus to Career (C2C) Summit: Future-Ready Universities and Colleges" in Bengaluru on May 15 and 16.

"The C2C Summit has been organised with the vision of providing skill-based education to students in higher education, thereby enabling and creating employment opportunities. The initiative aims to equip students in government colleges and universities with globally relevant and industry-required skills," said Higher Education Minister M.C. Sudhakar, while speaking at the curtain raiser for the summit on Wednesday.

He explained that the summit would bring together leading industrial organisations, academic experts, and government representatives on a common platform to deliberate and develop educational models that enhance employment opportunities for students in the State.

Highlighting the changing global landscape of higher education, Dr. Sudhakar emphasised that adapting to these evolving concepts and equipping students with skill-oriented education is a key priority. In this regard, the summit will focus on integrating industry-required skills into academic curricula and preparing students with practical exposure and technological competence.

He noted that change is inevitable, and aligning the education system with new concepts and industry needs will play a crucial role in addressing unemployment among students.

The summit is being organised in collaboration with departments, including the Department of Collegiate and Technical Education, the Department of Skill Development, Entrepreneurship, and Livelihood, the Department of Information Technology, Biotechnology, and Science & Technology, the Department of Commerce and Industries, the Department of Medical Education, and the Department of Agriculture.

Higher Education Minister M.C. Sudhakar during a press meet in Bengaluru on Wednesday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

State Education Policy

"The State government is likely to make a decision regarding the new State Education Policy (SEP) in the upcoming Cabinet meeting," said Dr. Sudhakar. "The higher education system has already been aligned with the proposed policy. Discussions are ongoing to ensure the maintenance of academic excellence, and some Ministers are currently reviewing the draft policy, which has led to a delay. A Cabinet decision on the SEP is expected soon," he added.

KSOU

In response to a question regarding a recent event held at the Karnataka State Open University (KSOU), despite an order from the government to the contrary, the Minister said though the government had imposed restrictions, the event was held in accordance with directions from the High Court.

II PUC results to be announced today at 3 p.m.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The results of the 2026 II PUC annual exam-1 will be announced on Thursday at 3 p.m. Students can access their results through the official website: https://karresults.nic.in and also via the KarnatakaOne Mobile App.

On WhatsApp or SMS

In addition, the result details will be sent by the Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) to the students' registered mobile numbers through WhatsApp or SMS.

This year, for the first time, the marks card will be made available digitally through DigiLocker on April 9 at 3 p.m. and students can download their marks card by visiting https://www.digilocker.gov.in. To download the marks card from DigiLocker, Karnataka's Centre for E-governance has released a detailed video.

The result sheets will also be made available to the respective colleges on the same day at 3 p.m.

HC notice to govt. on plea for SIT probe into death of man under suspicious circumstances at rehab centre

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has ordered issue of notice to the State government on a PIL petition seeking a probe by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) into the death of 22-year-old Darshan P.G. under suspicious circumstance at the Unity Social Service rehabilitation centre in Adakamaranahalli in the Madanayakanahalli Police Station limits during November last year.

A Division Bench, comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C.M. Poonacha, passed the order on the petition filed by People's Union for Civil Liberties-Karnataka and Association for Prisoners' Families for Justice, Bengaluru.

Darshan died on November 19, 2025, after he was admitted to the centre on Nov. 16

Initial report

Darshan died on November 19, 2025, after having been admitted to the rehabilitation centre on November 16. Initially, an unnatural death report was filed based on his mother's complaint. As post-mortem disclosed multiple injuries on his body, she lodged another complaint, naming both the Vivek Nagar police and the centre.

According to her, the Vivek Nagar police had detained Darshan on November 12 for creating public nuisance while drunk, even though no case was registered at the station. When she tried to bail him out on November 15, the police allegedly threatened to send him to jail but admitted him to the centre instead due to his alcohol addiction on her request by taking ₹7,500 for admission.

The mother, as per the complaint, called the centre daily but was never allowed to speak directly with her son. On November 26, the centre informed her of Darshan's death, claiming respiratory problems.

The Madanayakanahalli police, who initially registered an unnatural death report, had later registered a First Information Report for alleged murder, naming an inspector and other police personnel attached to the Vivek Nagar Police Station. The probe of the case was transferred to the Criminal Investigation Report.

Meanwhile, the Bench declined to consider other pleas of the petitioners to constitute a committee headed by a retired judge of the High Court to ascertain the investigation, prosecution and compensation in all cases of custodial deaths over the past five years; to evolve a comprehensive protocol for prevention of custodial torture and deaths including mandatory medical examinations, registration of FIR, magisterial inquiries, investigation, disciplinary actions, among others.

IN THE HONOURABLE COURT OF XIII ADDITIONAL DISTRICT JUDGE AT GAJUWAKA
O.S. 23/2022

Between:M/s The National Engineering Works, Represented by its Proprietor Potnuru Laxmi, W/o Potnuru Venkata Murali, Represented by her GPA Holder Potnuru Venkata Murali ...**Plaintiff**
And : LEO CONTECH PVT. LTD.,Represented by its Director Mahendra Raju, ...**Defendant**

SUMMONS

To, LEO CONTECH PVT. LTD., Rep. by its Director Mahendra Raju, Sy.No.101/1, Kadusonnappanahally, Kannur Post, Off Hennur Road, Bengaluru -562149.
LEO CONTECH PVT. LTD., Rep. by its Director Mahendra Raju, U.G. 36. NEW BEL, RD. C.N. HALLI, BANGALORE, VENKATESHAPURA, BENGALORE, NORTH BENGALORE, KARNATAKA-560045 IN.

Whereas the above named Plaintiff has instituted a suit against you for the suit claim. You are hereby summoned to appear in the court in person or by a Pleader duly instructed and able to answer all material question related to the suit or who shall be accompanied by some person able to answer all such questions on this **16-04-2026 at 10.30 A.M.** in the forenoon to answer the claim and at the day fixed for your appearance is appointed for the final disposal of the suit you must be prepared to produce on that day all the witnesses upon whose evidence and all the documents upon which you intend to rely in support of your defense.

Take notice that in default of your appearance on that day and hour before mentioned the application will be heard and determined in your absence.

Advocate or Plaintiff
P. RAMA RAO (RAMU) M.Com., L.L.B.,
ADVOCATE
D.No. 27-2-72/15, Friends Enclave Official Colony, Srinagar, Gajuwaka,
VISAKHAPATNAM -26 PH-9848603003

BANARAS LOCOMOTIVE WORKS, VARANASI-221004

Tender Notice No. PCE/BLW(ET)/Publish/2026-27/018RT2 **Office of the: PCE**
E-TENDER **Date: 07/04/2026**

Dy. Chief Engineer, Banaras Locomotive Works, Varanasi on behalf of the President of India invites "Open" Tender through E-Tendering from the contractors. **SN. : 1, Tender No.: BLW-WAT-ET-018RT2-25-26, Name of Work :** Operation & maintenance of existing Automatic Chlorination Plants at various Pumps in BLW for drinking water treatment as per BIS for 5 Years. **Tender Cost (Rs):** Rs. 2,30,05,468.20, **Earnest Money (Rs):** Rs. 4,60,100.00, **Time of Completion:** 60 Months, **Closing Date of Tender:** 30/04/2026 at 15:00 PM, **Date of Opening of Tender:** 30/04/2026 at 15:30 PM, **Special Notice:** To see the detailed terms & conditions of tender and for submission of tender, please visit- **"website: http:www.ireps.gov.in".**

PRO/BLW/C-01 **Dy. Chief Engineer**

/blwvaranasi " Website:- www.blw.indianrailways.gov.in"

IN THE HONOURABLE COURT OF VIII ADDITIONAL DISTRICT JUDGE AT GAJUWAKA
I.A. 596/2022
O.S. 23/2022

Between:M/s The National Engineering Works, Represented by its Proprietor Potnuru Laxmi, W/o Potnuru Venkata Murali, Represented by her GPA Holder Potnuru Venkata Murali ...**Petitioner/Plaintiff**
And : LEO CONTECH PVT. LTD.,Represented by its Director Mahendra Raju, ...**Respondent/Defendant**

NOTICE

To, LEO CONTECH PVT. LTD., Rep. by its Director Mahendra Raju, U.G. 36. NEW BEL, RD. C.N. HALLI, BANGALORE, VENKATESHAPURA, BENGALORE, NORTH BENGALORE, KARNATAKA-560045 IN.
LEO CONTECH PVT. LTD., Rep. by its Director Mahendra Raju, Sy.No.101/1, Kadusonnappanahally, Kannur Post, Off Hennur Road, Bengaluru -562149.

Take notice that the application filed by the above petitioner/plaintiff is posted for hearing on **16-04-2026 at 10.30 A.M.** before the above said Court and if you want to contest the matter you may do so either in person or by a duly instructed pleader and if you fail to show cause the matter will be decided in your absence and exparte.

Take notice that in default of your appearance on that day and hour before mentioned the application will be heard and determined in your absence.

Advocate or Petitioner / Plaintiff
P. RAMA RAO (RAMU) M.Com., L.L.B.,
ADVOCATE
D.No. 27-2-72/15, Friends Enclave Official Colony, Srinagar, Gajuwaka,
VISAKHAPATNAM - 26 PH - 9848603003

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
(Electrical (General), Construction, Egmore, Chennai)

Tender Notice No: E-HQ-CN-MS-EOT-1-2026-27, Dt:04.04.2026.

For and on behalf of the President of India, The Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer/ General / Construction / Southern Railway / Egmore, Chennai - 600 008 invites E-Tender for the following Work.

Name of the work: Perambur New Railway Hospital - Phase-II - Electrification of C and E Block in New Railway Hospital, Perambur.

	Tender Notice No. and Date	E-HQ-CN-MS-EOT-1-2026-27, Dt:04.04.2026.
1	Period of Completion	12 Months
2	Approximate Cost of Work	Rs. 37854574.66
3	Cost of Tender form	Nil
4	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs. 757100/-
5	Tender Closing Date & Time	29/04/2026 11:00 Hrs.
6	Tender Opening Date & Time	29/04/2026 11:30 Hrs.

Complete details can be seen on **www.ireps.gov.in.**

Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer, Construction,Chennai, Egmore.
(For and on behalf of President of India)

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. CAO/CN/BNC/180/2026
Dated : 30-03-2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Consultancy services for Detailed master planning, urban designing, engineering & preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Yelahanka Mega Coaching Terminal - Augmentation of Coaching maintenance and Platform Facilities at Rail Wheel Factory, Yelahanka, Bengaluru **(Tender Ref. No. TECH-CONSULTANTS)**	Rs. 4,10,00,000/-

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 15:00 Hrs on 22-05-2026

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Deputy Chief Engineer/Construction/ Works/Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/16/AAS/PRB/SWR/2026-27

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform ticktes, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway-SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

Interview Notice

Applications are invited for the following post on a short-term basis at ICAR-NISST, Regional Station, GKVK Campus, Bengaluru, as per the schedule given below: -

Sl. No.	Name of Post	No. of Post	Last date of receiving of application (through email only)
1.	Young Professional- I	01	10.04.2026

For details, please visit our website **https://seedicar.org.in**

Sd/-,
In-charge
ICAR-NISST, R.S. Bengaluru

PUBLIC NOTICE

We are undertaking a title investigation on the immovable property bearing Survey No. 74/2 measuring 20 Guntas, situated at Thammarasanahalli Village, Sulibele Hobli, Hosakote Taluk, Bangalore Rural District (more fully described in the '**Schedule**' hereto and hereinafter referred to as '**Schedule Property**'). The said title due diligence is being conducted for and on behalf of our Client who is desirous of acquiring the Schedule Property. Mr. Ehsanullashariff, son of late K.G. Ahmed Shariff ('**Owner**') has represented to our Client that he owns the Schedule Property and has unrestricted rights of alienation over the same.

Notice is hereby given to the general public that any person/s other than the present owner, asserting any right, title, charge, lien, claim/s or any interest whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Property are hereby called upon to submit to the undersigned, their claim/s, if any, over the Schedule Property or submit their objections, if any, to the aforementioned transaction. The said claim/s or objections must be in writing, together with documentary proof to support such claim/s or objections and must be delivered to us at the address given below within a period of **10 (ten) days** from the date of publication of this Notice. If no such claim/s or objections are received, it shall be deemed that no one else other than the Owner has any right, title, interest or claim whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Property and our Client would be at liberty to proceed with the said transaction in connection with the Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE

(Description of the Schedule Property)

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Survey No. 74/2 measuring 20 Guntas, situated at Thammarasanahalli Village, Sulibele Hobli, Hosakote Taluk, Bangalore Rural District and bounded as follows:

East by : Land bearing Survey No. 73/3;
West by : Land bearing Survey No. 74/1;
North by : Land bearing Survey No.75; and
South by : Land bearing Survey No. 73.

Sd/-
Mr. Srinivas B.R., Partner
DSK Legal,
Prestige Loka, No. 201,
2nd Floor, No. 7/1 & 7/7, Brunton Road,
Bengaluru – 560025, Tel: 080-69548770.

Place : Bangalore
Date : 08.04.2026

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice
Kota Division

XEN(GSU-I), West Central Railway, Kota for and on behalf of President of Union of India invites following open E-Tender for Gati Shakti Unit/Kota., **Tender No.-** GSU-KOTA-02-2026, **Description of Work -** NAD-MTJ Section: Construction of 07 Nos Road Over Bridge (ROB) in lieu of LC No: 58, 60, 75, 123, 128, 216 & 217 in Nagda-Mathura Section of Kota division in West central Railway, **Cost of work -** 2510669983.67, **Date of closing of tender -**30.04.2026, Complete details are available in the E-Tender notice uploaded on the railway websitewww.ireps.gov.in and also placed on the notice board of the XEN/GSU-I/Kota, DRM Office, West Central Railway Kota's office. Offers are acceptable through E-procurement only, off line/Manual offer will not be accepted in any condition.

Sd./-
XEN/GSU-I
West Central Railway, Kota

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान
एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

Government of Jharkhand
Jharkhand Flying Institute
A Society Regd. Under Department of Cabinet Secretariat & Vigilance (Civil Aviation Division)
State Hangar, Birsa Munda Airport Road, Hinoo Ranchi-834002
E-mail-jfi.govtfly@gmail.com, Website-www.jharkhandaviation.in

Ref. No: - A/c-GT/JFI/69/2025/194/Ranchi, Date:- 07/ 04/ 2026
Corrigendum-01
e-Global Tender published through Reference No. - A/c-GT/JFI/69/2025-182/Ranchi,dated-02.04.2026 (PR No-376513)

Some changes are made to the RFP Document and the revised content to be read as mentioned below:

Due to an unintentional clerical error, the content regarding the payment provisions put forth at point 16 of CHAPTER-II and point 8 of CHAPTER-III were observed to be contradictory.Hence, the existing content in the point 8 of CHAPTER-III may be ignored and to be read in line with the point 16 of CHAPTER-II as the provision contained in both the points is the same.

Other Terms & Condition of NIT & RFP will remain the same.
This Corrigendum is also available on the website www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in

Sd/-Capt. S.P. Sinha
Managing Director cum Director Ops
Jharkhand Flying Institute

PR 376952 (Civil Aviation)26-27*D

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE VISIT
www.thehinduads.com
CALL: Bengaluru: 98455 29981 • 080-22071826
Mangaluru: 0824-2417575 • 2417580
Hubballi: 0836-2338600 • 2335700

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SHARIFA Bi Abdul Rahim, W/o. Abdul Rahim Yagappa, r/at No.3, L No.2nd Street, Anthony Nicholas Street Cross, Ashoknagar, Bengaluru 560025 have changed my name as Sharifa Begum vide affidavit dtd 07.04.2026 sworn before Notary Meer Hassan, Bluru

I, AMRUTHA Bindu K, aged about 29 years, r/at #108, Kalappa layout, Doddabommasandra, Vidyaranyapura, Bengaluru 560097, have changed my name as Aira Hussain vide affidavit dtd 07.04.2026 sworn before Notary Meer Hassan, Bluru

I, MALLIKARJUNA S D s/o Sangaiah, residing at T4 Nirmala Residency, Aradeshanahalli Gate, Kadathanamale, po: Arakere, Dist: Bengaluru–561203, have changed my minor son's name from Sangamesh M Devanalmath to Bhuvan M Devanalmath (Date of Birth: 12/07/2014) vide affidavit dated 11/03/2026 sworn before Notary Kusumakar R.V., Kalaburagi.

I, ARMY No. JC879410W, Rank: NB/SUB, Name: Samuel.S, Regiment of Artillery , R/at No.7, Henrys 2nd Line, Coromandel Post, K G F-563118, have correct my wife's name with initial as Anitha.D instead of D. Anitha vide Affidavit dated 08-04-2026 sworn before Notary N.Srinivasa, KGF.

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, AROKIANATHAN Robert, S/o. Arul Dass Robert, r/at No.79, Anthony Nicholas, Ashoknagar, Bengaluru 560025 have changed my name as Robert Arokianathan Ramesh vide affidavit dtd 07.04.2026 sworn before Notary Meer Hassan, Bluru

I, Vikram, S/o Yuvaraj Poovani, Residing at Melanteguttu House, Hirgana Post, Karkala Taluk, Udupi District, have changed my name to Vikram Poovani vide Affidavit Number 827/06, dated 06-05-2006, before Notary Chetan Varma S, Moodbidri.

THANKSGIVING

THANKSGIVING

Thank you Infant Jesus for healing my husband

- Jancy

TRAVEL

Adi Kailash & Om Parvat Yatra
Organised By
Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam Ltd.
(Uttarakhand Tourism)
7 Nights / 8 Days Package
Best Time to Visit
May – June
Package @ 45000+GST
Includes: Transport + Accommodation + All meals + Guide
For Bookings Call:
K. M. V. N. LTD.
95208 64206, 08 86500 02520
crckmvn@gmail.com, kmvn@yahoo.com
Visit us: kmvn.in

Indian scientists find new way to measure distances in deep space

The dense and rapidly spinning remnant cores of dead stars are called pulsars; they emit beams of radio waves that sweep across the earth like light from a lighthouse sweeps across ships at sea; pulsars have an extraordinarily fixed spinning rate, so the pulses arrive very regularly

Shreejaya Karantha

Indian astronomers, including from IIT-Kanpur, have developed a new way to measure distances in the universe using the pulsating cores of dead stars, by studying how their radio emissions are distorted as they travel through space. The technique combines a pair of subtle effects that occur when pulsar signals pass through clouds of ionised gas in the Milky Way.

The dense and rapidly spinning remnant cores of dead stars are called pulsars. They emit beams of radio waves that sweep across the earth like light from a lighthouse sweeps across ships at sea. Pulsars have an extraordinarily fixed spinning rate, so the pulses arrive very regularly. So astronomers have used them as cosmic clocks.

Pulsar timing experiments use millisecond pulsars, which spin hundreds of times per second, to create precise timing models that predict the arrival of following pulses. Any difference in arrival time indicates the presence of another astrophysical event, such as those producing gravitational waves.

But as these radio waves travel through the galaxy before reaching the earth, they also pass through clouds of ionised gas, or plasma, that contain free electrons that slightly alter the radio signal.

The Vela pulsar wind nebula. Light blue represents X-ray polarisation data from the NASA Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer. Pink and purple colours correspond to data from the NASA Chandra X-Ray observatory. NASA

Way of light

Astronomers measure one of these effects using a quantity called the dispersion measure (DM). As radio waves travel through the interstellar medium, free electrons slow down lower frequency waves more than higher frequency ones. This causes different frequencies to arrive at the earth at slightly different times. By measuring the delay caused by dispersion, astronomers can estimate how many electrons lie between the earth and the pulsar.

In general, signals from more distant pulsars pass through more interstellar plasma and encounter more electrons. As a result, DM provides a rough estimate of how far away the pulsar is.

Astronomers have long used DM to estimate the distance to pulsars. However, this method relies on models of electron distribution throughout the Milky Way that can be unreliable in complex regions such as the Gum Nebula, a vast region of ionised gas and one of the largest known nebulae in our galaxy. Possibly associated with a supernova explosion or ionisation by hot stars, the nebula contains the Vela Pulsar and regions that can strongly influence radio signals passing through it.

Wobbling signals

The interstellar medium also affects pulsar signals in another way. As plasma is not perfectly smooth, its irregularities scatter radio waves as they travel through it. This scattering causes the signals to follow multiple paths before reaching the earth. The scattered waves interfere with each other, causing the pulsar's brightness to vary with time.

The term for this is scintillation, similar to the twinkling of stars in the night sky. Since the signals arrive by different paths and at slightly different times, the signal appears stretched out or smeared. This effect is known as scatter broadening.

In the new study, published in the *Monthly Notices of Royal Astronomical Society*, the team combined DM with scatter broadening to refine the distance estimates. As scattering depends on how turbulent the plasma is, the electron density, and the location of the scattering region along the line of sight, the joint method revealed where the turbulent plasma is located between the earth and the pulsar much more accurately.

In the new study, published in the Monthly Notices of Royal Astronomical Society, the team combined dispersion measure with scatter broadening to refine the distance estimates

"Previously, we had only one 'soldier'– dispersion – to solve the problem," the study's lead author Ashish Kumar, formerly at IIT-Kanpur and now at the National Centre for Radio Astrophysics, said. "Now we have two: dispersion and scattering."

The study was carried out with co-authors Avinash Deshpande, former professor at the Raman Research Institute, and Pankaj Jain, a professor at IIT-Kanpur.

Systematic application

"The authors have done a careful job of utilising a variety of measurements on 10 pulsars to constrain the structure of the interstellar medium in this region, including the distance to the dominant scattering region [the Gum Nebula]," Cornell University professor James Cordes, who wasn't involved in the study, said. He also said combining scattering and dispersion to estimate pulsar distances is not entirely new and has been explored in pulsar studies for decades. In this study, however, the team applied the approach in a systematic way: they used both dispersion and scattering measurements together and adjusted their model step by step until it matched both the observed DM and the scatter broadening.

The distance where the model and observations agreed was then taken to be the pulsar's distance.

Their work shows that much of the scattering affecting pulsars in this direction likely comes from turbulent layers of the Gum Nebula. Using observations of 10 pulsars in the same region of the sky as Gum Nebula, researchers also developed a refined model of the nebula's electron distribution. Results showed that the Vela pulsar lies behind the nebula's front shell.

No hard limit

Scatter broadening depends on how strongly a pulsar's signal is scattered along the line of sight. Calculating this exactly requires extensive analysis. So to simplify it, researchers combined the dependencies into a single parameter, called the *k*-factor, at a given frequency.

Estimating the *k*-factor was the main technical challenge of the study, Dr. Kumar said, as it varies significantly in complex regions. However, one can determine its value for the target pulsar from a nearby pulsar at a known distance.

For the Gum Nebula, the team analysed several pulsars in the region and calculated their individual *k*-factors. Instead of adopting a single number, they used a range of possible values to account for uncertainties in the scattering properties of the plasma. The team is now working on a follow-up study of roughly 300 pulsars across our galaxy to determine how the *k*-factor varies in different directions.

Parallax-based measurements are extensively used in distance measurements. While the novel method offers several advantages over DM-only estimates, it cannot beat the "gold standards" of the parallax method in terms of accuracy, Dr. Kumar said.

However, while certain parallax techniques have a "hard limit" on distance, the new method has no specific distance limitation. It could even be used to measure distances to objects outside the Milky Way, like the enigmatic fast radio bursts.

(Shreejaya Karantha is a freelance science writer)

When cornstarch water is deformed quickly, it behaves like a solid. The image shows a hammer pulling a nail out of the mixture. A. BAUMGARTEN, K. KAMRIN, AND J. BALES/MIT

Fast-moving cornstarch acts like a liquid before hardening

Vasudevan Mukunth

If you mix cornstarch and water, you will have a substance that defies common sense. If you punch it with your fist, it will feel like you hit a solid wall. But if you move your finger through it slowly, the substance will flow like honey. And scientists have long struggled to understand how this transition happens.

A new study in *Physical Review Letters* has figured it out using high-speed photography and direct force measurements. The authors, from the University of Minnesota, reported that at an extreme speed, the cornstarch mixture behaves like a liquid first before becoming tougher.

For these studies, scientists have usually watched how a drop spreads when it falls on a surface using high-speed cameras. For the new study, the researchers built a specialised rig. They dropped mixtures of cornstarch and water with concentrations ranging from 30% to 43%, on a sensitive force sensor at speeds of up to 7.2 m/s, and recorded it with high-speed cameras.

Thus they could 'see' and 'feel' the impact simultaneously.

The team thus identified three ways in which the drops responded to the surface. The low-concentration mixture behaved like water: the impact force peaked early and then faded as the liquid spread. At a higher concentration and low impact speed, however, the fluid jammed" almost instantly, behaving like a solid sphere, exerting a symmetric force as it struck the surface and abruptly stopped spreading.

Then the team made its surprising discovery. At high concentrations and high impact speed, the mixture behaved like a re-entrant liquid. The drop acted like a liquid for the first fraction of a millisecond, then quickly transitioned to becoming a jammed solid.

The researchers were able to explain this behaviour using a concept called Reynolds dilatancy. When you compress a dense suspension of particles, the grains try to move past each other. This causes the grain network to expand, which sucks the surrounding water into the gaps and creates friction between the particles. This process turns the liquid into a solid.

The team found that at an ultra-high speed, the initial impact was governed by the raw momentum of the fluid – and this governing happened too quickly for the process that jammed the particle to take over. But as the drop slowed down, the dilatancy mechanism caught up.

The researchers also identified a sudden and pronounced change in the rate of force, which was the exact moment the drop transformed from a liquid into a jammed solid.

The study concluded by offering a new mathematical model that the authors said could predict how these drops will behave across all three regimes.

The new study has reportedly solved a complex physics puzzle and also has practical applications. Understanding how complex fluids respond to extreme stress is vital for improving 3D printing techniques, which are used in industry and which some countries are planning to use on the moon next decade.

Engineers are also exploring using complex fluids in protective gear and designing 'soft robots' that can become more or less stiff on command.

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Quiz on poisons that became medicines

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1
This compound is extracted from the foxglove plant. The English botanist William Withering documented it as a treatment for "dropsy" in 1785. It works by inhibiting a sodium-potassium pump in heart muscle cells, thus strengthening the heartbeat, and remains in clinical use today. Name it.

QUESTION 2
Hunters across the Amazon basin used a plant-derived substance called X on blowgun darts for centuries. X causes death by paralysing the respiratory muscles. It also featured in a Tintin story. But when X is purified and delivered in small doses, it relaxes muscles, thus transforming abdominal surgery in the 1940s. What is X?

QUESTION 3
_____ is a neurotoxin produced by a bacterium of the Clostridium genus. It is the most acutely lethal substance by weight known. However, when it is injected in micrograms, it can treat chronic migraine and is also used in cosmetic procedures. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 4
The Ancient Egyptians and Greeks chewed the bark of a particular tree to relieve pain and fever. In the 19th century, scientists isolated the active compound and chemically modified it to reduce its irritating effects on the stomach. Thus was born one of the most widely consumed drugs in history. Name the drug.

QUESTION 5
Y is a metalloid that humans have long used as a poison; once it was even a favoured tool of murderers because it is tasteless. Regulators approved it in 2000 to treat a specific form of leukaemia after Chinese researchers found it could kill cancer cells at specific doses. Name Y.

Visual: When cows ingested fodder made from this plant in the 1920s, their blood stopped clotting. In 1940, scientists found a compound in the plant called dicoumarol to be responsible, and sold it as an anticoagulating agent. Name this legume. IVAR LEIDUS (CC BY-SA)

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

Answers to March 31 quiz:
1. Maker of the British computer that preceded UNIVAC I by a few weeks **Ans: Ferranti**
2. Technology replaced by the UNISERVO tape drive **Ans: Punched cards**
3. World's first programmable electronic digital computer **Ans: ENIAC**
4. Liquid used for delay lines to store data as sound pulses **Ans: Mercury**
5. Devices that replaced transistors in computers in the 1960s **Ans: Integrated circuits**
Visual: **Grace Hopper**

First contact
Tamal Biswas | K.N. Viswanathan | Prem Nath Tiwari | Anmol Agrawal | Gaurav Vatsa

Inspiration for Dalit Entrepreneurs

Sri. C.G. Srinivasan

Felicitation Ceremony

Date: 09-04-2026, Thursday @11am
Venue : Dr. Ambedkar Bhavana, Vasantanagara, Bengaluru

A felicitation program has been organized to honor the lifetime achievements of Shri C.G. Srinivasan, who has made significant contributions to social service, industrial development, and the promotion of Dalit entrepreneurs.

For the past 17 years, Shri C.G. Srinivasan, through his continuous efforts under the guidance of Dr. L. Hanumantaiah through Karnataka Dalit Entrepreneurs Association(KDEA), has worked towards realizing the vision of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar for achieving economic self-reliance among Dalit communities.

With the support of all the Government in the state of Karnataka, he has been instrumental in formulating the following schemes for the economic upliftment of Dalits:

Industrial Land / Industrial Shed upfront Subsidy up to 75%.
Interest Subsidy Loan scheme at 4% upto 10 crores
4% interest subsidy scheme for certain commercial/business/Services and Hospitality activities up to Rs 1 crore.
Textile-Related Industry Subsidy at 75% subsidy up to Rs. 2 crore.
Karnataka State Collateral Security Support upto Rs 2 crores.
Soft Seed Capital – Interest-Free Loan up to Rs. 75 lakh
Capital Investment Subsidy up to Rs. 225 lakh.
Exemption of Stamp Duty up to 100% & Concessional Registration Charges
50% Power Subsidy for Textile Units Using 20 HP to 200 HP.
Power Subsidy at Rs 2 per unit for the first 5 years.
Exemption on Tax on Electricity Tariff.
Full Reimbursement of Loan processing fee, legal fee, loan disbursement fee.

ಎಲ್ಲರೂ ಅಪಾರ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮವನ್ನು ಯಶಸ್ವಿಗೊಳಿಸಬೇಕೆಂದು ವಿನಂತಿ

S V MANJUNATH
Sri Venkateshwara electricals
No 07 Hoodi, Basavanagar road
Mahadevapura post, Bangalore 56004

ALTIUS

Altius Aerospace PVT Ltd

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Women borrowers' share of India's total credit in 2025

26 in per cent. Women borrowers in India hold a credit portfolio of ₹76 lakh crore as of 2025, according to a NITI Aayog report. It said that between December 2017 and 2025, the credit-active women borrowers registered a compounded annual growth rate of 9%. PTI

Decline in crude oil futures after ceasefire announcement

18 in per cent. Crude oil prices nosedived to ₹8,775 per barrel in futures trade on Wednesday, after the U.S. and Iran agreed to a two-week ceasefire. Crude oil futures for April delivery opened lower by 6% to ₹10,029 per barrel, its lower circuit limit, on the Multi-Commodity Exchange. PTI

Polling stations tagged as 'vulnerable' for Nagaland bypoll

13 Security has been tightened for the bypoll to the Koridang Assembly seat in Nagaland's Mokokchung district, with night curfew in force in four villages following an election-related violence that claimed one life. Six candidates are in the fray for Thursday's Assembly bypoll. PTI

Share of overutilised loco-pilots in Indian Railways in 2025-26

55 in per cent. A railway loco pilots' union claimed that 8.85% engine drivers worked for over 12 hours straight during 2025-26, while 46.96% were deployed for more than nine hours. As per railway norms, a loco pilot cannot be deployed for a shift longer than nine hours at a stretch. PTI

Cabinet-approved subsidy on P&K fertilizers for kharif

41,534 in ₹ crore. A meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the subsidy rates effective from April 1 to September 30, 2026. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

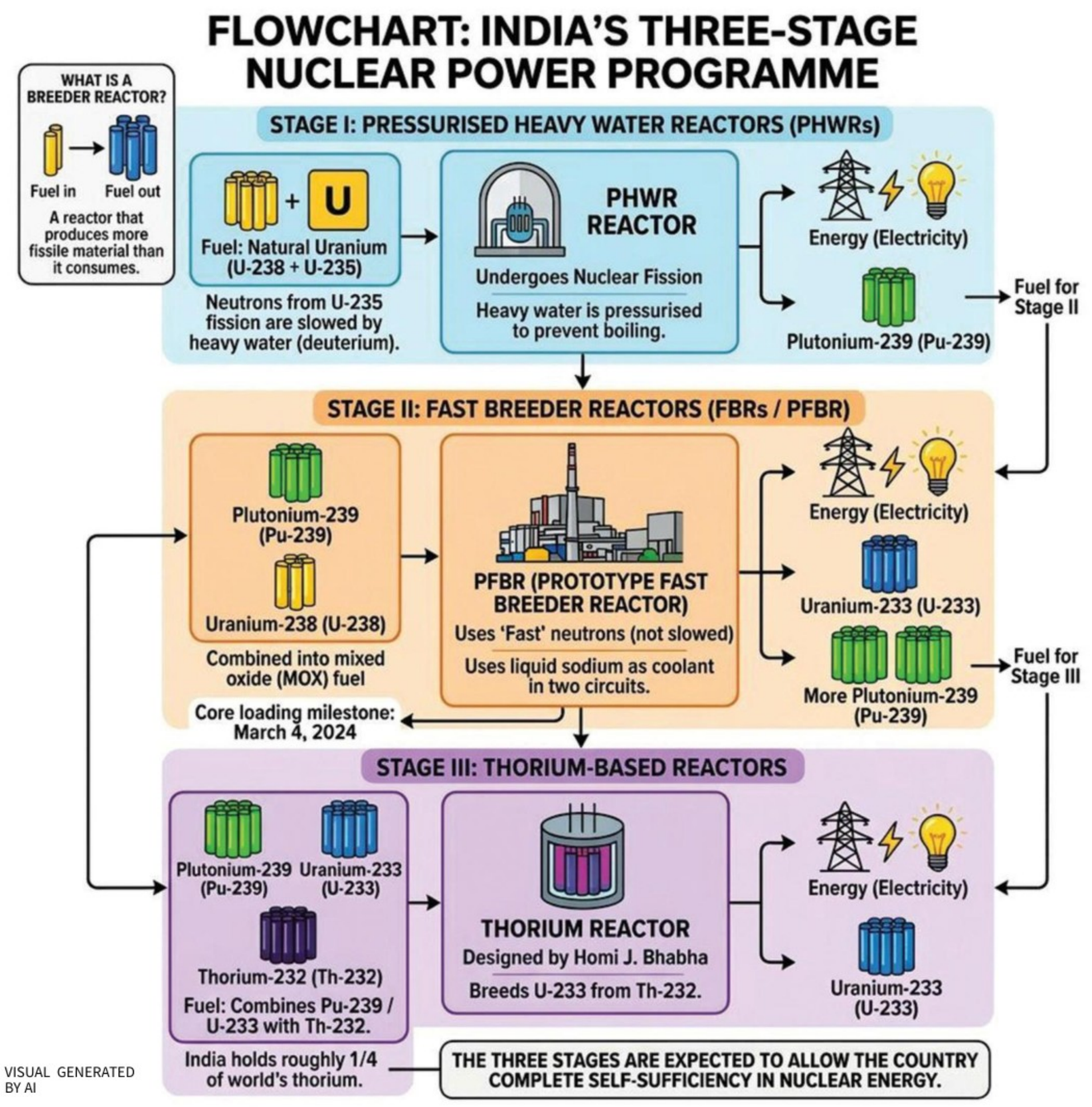
Follow us facebook.com/thehindu X.com/the_hindu instagram.com/the_hindu

Why India wants fast breeder reactors

How does a fast breeder reactor work? How is an FBR different from a PHWR? What is India's three-stage nuclear programme? Why are FBRs difficult to build and operate? How has India pursued fast breeder reactors? What happens after a reactor achieves criticality? What next for the PFBR?

EXPLAINER

Vasudevan Mukunth



VISUAL GENERATED BY AI

THE GIST

- PFBR at Kalpakkam achieved criticality, the first step in a sustained chain reaction, but commercial operation remains pending.
- Fast breeder reactors use plutonium and depleted uranium to produce more fuel, forming a bridge in India's three-stage nuclear programme aimed at long-term fuel security.
- Despite being technically feasible, FBRs face high costs, operational complexity, and delays, making their economic viability and wider acceptance uncertain.

The story so far:

In an important milestone, the prototype fast breeder reactor (PFBR) at Kalpakkam achieved criticality on April 6. The term 'criticality' is familiar to India: over the decades, it has been associated with the slow and tedious successes of India's nuclear power programme. At the same time, in keeping with many terms in the nuclear vocabulary, 'criticality' is also often mistaken as an end goal. In reality, it is actually the first step.

What is criticality?

A nuclear reactor becomes critical when its chain reaction is able to sustain itself. That is, when an atom's nucleus undergoes nuclear fission, it releases neutrons that trigger at least one more fission reaction in the surrounding nuclei. Reactor engineers ensure this happens by controlling the composition of the fuel (the material whose nuclei undergo fission), how well the neutrons are able to 'access' more nuclei, and the temperature of the reactor. Once a reactor is critical, it also means it is in a kind of stable state. However, it does not mean that it is operating in a commercially viable way. That comes much later. After criticality, the operators keep the reactor running as it produces a low amount of power, for months if necessary, while they check if its operating parameters are within design limits. If an operator is sure that the parameters are, they can go to the next stage.

How do FBRs work?

Most of India's currently operating nuclear reactors are pressurised heavy water reactors (PHWRs). They are designed to support the fission of natural uranium. Natural uranium consists of 99.3% of uranium-238 and 0.7% of uranium-235. '235' and '238' denote the total number of protons and neutrons in the nucleus. In a PHWR, neutrons are introduced into the reactor, where a device called a moderator slows them down. This is necessary for the neutrons to cause uranium-235 to undergo fission. When it does, it releases heat, which the PHWR converts to electricity; a small amount of plutonium; and a few neutrons.

PHWRs are inefficient because only a small fraction of the fuel, around 1%, undergoes fission before it becomes unusable.

A fast-breeder reactor (FBR) is more efficient, achieving a fuel use rate of around 10% or more. Mainly, the fuel consists of plutonium, not uranium. The reactor core is surrounded by a 'blanket' of depleted uranium, like the unusable fuel produced by PHWRs. When a fast neutron bombards the blanket, the uranium nuclei are transmutated to plutonium nuclei, which are reprocessed as nuclear fuel. The plutonium-based fuel also uses the fast neutrons to undergo fission, releasing more fast neutrons.

What is India's three-stage programme?

The nuclear physicist Homi Bhabha is widely credited with conceiving India's nuclear programme in the first years of its independence. The programme has three stages. In the first stage, PHWRs will use natural uranium to produce plutonium and depleted uranium and electricity. In the second stage, FBRs will use the plutonium and depleted uranium from the first stage to produce even more plutonium and electricity. Finally, future nuclear reactors will use plutonium and thorium to produce electricity.

Bhabha came up with this programme because India has abundant quantities of thorium but only modest reserves of uranium.

And in this scheme, FBRs have been envisaged as a bridge between the initial step, to use what we have, and the final step, to complete the cycle and thus make India self-sufficient in nuclear power.

Why are FBRs challenging?

That an FBR is easier said than done would be a gross underestimate. The Indian government approved the PFBR more than two decades ago. It was designed by the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research and built by the Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam, Ltd. The latter proved to be more challenging than first expected.

Among other features, the PFBR uses liquid sodium as coolant. Sodium becomes liquid at a higher temperature, and at higher temperature heat transfer is more efficient. Liquid sodium also does not need to be pressurised. However, it reacts violently with air and water, so the pumps, pipes, and tanks exposed to liquid sodium need to be perfectly sealed, with stringent leak detection protocols. Water-cooled reactors do not have such operational complexities, nor the additional cost.

India is also not alone in confronting these challenges. Japan's Monju Nuclear Power Plant suffered a sodium leak and fire in 1995, leading to long shutdowns; the plant eventually had to be decommissioned. The Superphénix in France was once the world's largest breeder reactor but it was shut down as well, due to technical issues and high operating costs, which also fanned political opposition. Russia, however, has continued to maintain a small fleet of fast-breeder reactors.

In other words, operators have shown FBRs to be technically feasible but they are not yet economically feasible; they have also not won broader public acceptance. Aside from the costs of making them, they also demand rigorous oversight – which depends on both engineering excellence and the safety culture.

How has India pursued FBRs?

India is pursuing FBRs because, as discussed earlier, the three-stage nuclear programme prioritises long-term fuel security. Importantly, it is able to do so because India's nuclear sector remains largely driven by the state. Its decision-making structure is relatively insulated from the ruling establishment: the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) reports directly to the Prime Minister's Office. As a result, as long as there has been political stability, India has been able to sustain nuclear projects across electoral cycles.

On the flip side, this insulation has reduced scrutiny of the nuclear power programme and protected it from the same pressure to deliver that assails other public sector enterprises like the Indian Railways and the National Highways Authority of India. Engineers have taken on projects with limited transparency on timelines and budgets. When one or both have slipped, the accountability has been spread across agencies. The PFBR's original cost was ₹3,500 crore. It came to ₹6,800 crore in 2019. The DAE also sought multiple deadline extensions. In 2020, it said the PFBR would be commercialised in October 2022. That milestone is still pending.

The economics of FBRs also remain uncertain. In addition to the aforementioned issues, the broader fuel cycle – especially the reprocessing of spent fuel and the fabrication of new fuel assemblies – will require its own infrastructure. And for this the nuclear establishment will have to set up new regulatory processes.

What next for the PFBR?

The PFBR will be operated at a low power level to check its behaviour in different operating conditions. Engineers will collect the data from these tests to inform decisions about raising the reactor's power output and refining safety protocols. Eventually, they will seek approval from the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board to operate the reactor in commercial mode.

This entails running the PFBR at or near its rated capacity to generate electricity for the grid on a sustained basis, with standard operating procedures and clear regulatory oversight. At this point in time, the reactor will also have transitioned from being experimental to a commercial power plant.

In parallel, the DAE will also develop fuel reprocessing facilities and plan for future FBRs. Once these aims are closer to being realised, the government and India will develop a clearer sense of whether the broader vision of a closed fuel cycle can be realised.

Fire in B.R. Hills Tiger Reserve destroys nine acres of forest

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Forest authorities, already on high alert due to soaring temperatures, have intensified vigilance

Nearly nine acres of dry bamboo and lantana vegetation was destroyed in a forest fire reported at Karadimuttina Sirehalla in the B.R. Hills Tiger Reserve on Wednesday.

Forest authorities, already on high alert due to soaring temperatures, have intensified vigilance to prevent further outbreaks.

The fire was first noticed around 2.15 p.m. at Mavattoor in the Bailoor wildlife range, near Haavinamoole village.

Forest personnel rushed to the spot and managed to bring the blaze under control.

However, another fire broke out around 4.20 p.m. at Aane Muddina Kaadu, also close to Haavinamoole, raising concerns over recurring incidents in the area. According to the office of the Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF), Wildlife Sub-Division, Yelandur, the exact cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained.

Officials, however, pointed to extreme heat and gusty winds as key factors aiding the rapid spread of flames through dry vegetation.

Fire awareness campaigns were conducted at Haavinamoole village, home to around 100 families. Despite these efforts, incidents of forest fires continue to be reported.

Around 30 forest staff were involved in the firefighting operations, containing the blaze and preventing further damage to the forest.

Coffee planter killed in elephant attack in Kodagu

Local residents urge forest authorities in the State to take immediate steps to drive away elephants that have been camping in parts of Srimangala hobli in recent days

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

The incident has triggered panic among estate workers and residents, who note a recent surge in elephant activity within the estate areas. FILE PHOTO

Human-wildlife conflict continues to plague Kodagu district, with a coffee planter killed in a wild elephant attack in the early hours of Wednesday at Srimangala hobli in Ponnampet taluk. The deceased has been identified as Mokalamada Rathu, 56, a resident of Kaiemani.

According to reports, Rathu was on his way to his coffee estate when a wild elephant suddenly emerged and attacked him.

Though he was reportedly rushed to a hospital in Kutta, he succumbed to his injuries on the way.

The incident has triggered panic among estate workers and residents, who note a recent surge in elephant activity within the estate areas.

Local residents have urged forest authorities to take immediate steps to drive away elephants that have been camping in parts of Srimangala hobli (especially near the site of the elephant attack) for several days. Residents and estate workers have expressed concern over their safety following frequent sightings of wild elephants in and around coffee estates.

Elephant Reserve

Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre expressed deep sorrow over the incident. Describing the death as "extremely distressing", he said that the government and the Forest Department are making all possible efforts to mitigate human-elephant conflict. "There is no way to compensate for the loss of a human life," he said, assuring that the government stands with the bereaved family during this difficult time.

On the recurring issue of elephant-related conflict, the Minister said that the State government had drawn up plans to establish an 'Elephant Reserve' (Aane Dhama) as a long-term solution. However, the proposal has encountered hurdles in securing approval from the Central government. He added that steps will be taken to resolve these issues and move forward with the establishment of the elephant reserve to effectively tackle the problem.

Khandre proposes sterilisation of select wildlife species

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Eshwar Khandre

Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre on Wednesday said there is a need to regulate the population of some wildlife species owing to increasing incidents of human wildlife conflict.

He said there is a need to consider measures such as sterilisation or administering injections to control the reproductive capacity of select wildlife species.

He said that while wildlife conservation is important, there is also a need to prevent loss of human life due to man-animal conflicts.

The Minister said that this measure is only a proposal and that there should be a larger public debate on the issue.

"This is not a decision, but only a proposal for consideration. There is a need for public discussion on the matter. Since a related case is pending before the Supreme Court, discussions will be held with experts and legal professionals and a meeting with senior officials will be convened to decide on submitting a proposal to the court," Mr. Khandre said.

He added that in areas where the population of certain wildlife species has increased drastically, there should be a plan to consider controlling their growth for a year or two. "Similar ideas are being discussed in other States as well, there is a need for public debate on the issue," he added.

He said that the government is considering the voluntary relocation of forest dwellers who are willing to move out of forest areas.

"Instructions have been given to prepare a list of such individuals. Once the list is ready, discussions will be held with the Chief Minister, who is also the Finance Minister, regarding the funds, budget allocations etc," he said.

He added that relocating human settlements within forest areas would help expand wildlife habitats and also bring forest dwellers who are currently living without basic amenities into the mainstream society.

Driver killed after vehicle crashes into stationary lorry

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 60-year-old driver was killed after the vehicle he was driving rammed a stationary lorry at a traffic signal on Mysuru Road in Bengaluru on Wednesday. The incident occurred near the Satellite Bus Stand signal around 4 a.m. in the Byatarayanapura Traffic Police limits.

According to preliminary reports, the deceased, identified as Vijay Kumar, 60, was driving a vegetable-laden lorry. The police said the driver reportedly lost control of the vehicle and crashed into another lorry at the signal. The impact of the collision was so severe that the driver was killed on the spot, leaving the victim's body severely mutilated.

Sources said that the vehicle was transporting vegetables from Malur in Kolar district to R.R. Nagar to supply the items to an online grocery delivery platform. The body was shifted to Victoria Hospital.

The Byatarayanapura Traffic Police cleared the damaged vehicles and restored traffic movement in the area. A case has been registered.

Bomb threat email to KIA turns out to be hoax

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A bomb threat email sent to the Customer Engagement Centre of Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) created panic among airport authorities, triggering an immediate security response.

According to a complaint filed at the International Airport Police Station, the incident occurred on April 5 around 11.14 a.m., when staff at the BIAL Customer Engagement Centre received a suspicious email from the ID *seema_kunjan@outlook.com*. The email was sent to official airport addresses.

The email, reportedly written in Tamil, claimed that Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) had been planted on the airport premises and warned of blasts within a short span of time. It also contained threatening language and references to airport staff and security personnel, causing alarm among officials.

The sender of the mail, identified as Seema Kunjan, claimed to be part of a group from Coimbatore wanting to take revenge against the DMK-led Tamil Nadu government for betraying them.

Following the threat, airport authorities immediately initiated emergency protocols. A thorough security check was conducted across the airport premises with the assistance of CISF personnel, bomb disposal squads, and other security agencies. After an extensive search operation, no suspicious objects or explosives were found, and the threat was declared a hoax.

Subsequently, a formal complaint was lodged on Tuesday, and a case has been registered.

The police are tracing the origin of the email.

Ailing tiger Pruthvi dies

MYSURU: Pruthvi, a 13-year-old tiger at the Sri Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens, died on Wednesday morning after battling a neurological condition, zoo authorities said. According to a release, the tiger had stopped consuming food for the past two days and was suffering from congenital paresis.

Exhibition

BENGALURU: Artenblu presents Keepers of Time: Postcards from Bangalore, an exhibition of postcard-sized watercolour paintings by artist Manjunath Wali. It will be held at MKF Museum of Art, from April 11 to 19. Entry free.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public are hereby informed that my client is desirous to purchase the Flat No.01, Ground Floor, E-PID No.1467777640, situated at No.1303, 14th Cross, Binnamangala, Indiranagar 2nd Stage, Bengaluru – 560 038 from its Owner Mrs.Kusumam Ramanujan W/o Mr.P. Sukumara Menon. Any person(s) having or claiming any right, title, interest or claim whatsoever in respect of the aforesaid property, or having any objection to the proposed transaction, are hereby required to inform the undersigned in writing, along with supporting documents, within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, it shall be presumed that no such claims or objections exist with respect to the said property.

Nitin Kumar Reddy K N, Advocate
No.30, 5th Main Road, Gandhinagar,
Bengaluru – 560 009.
Ph No :+91 9591039004,
+91 98863 92138

PUBLIC NOTICE

BE IT KNOWN TO ALL THAT, My Client, **Arvind A Pol** S/o. P.S. Appu Rao, residing at No. 23, 2nd Cross, D'Souza Layout, Hoskerehalli, R.R. Nagar, Opp. to V Legacy, Bangalore -560085, hereby bring to the notice of general public that My client has lost Original Sale Deed dated 09.06.1968 vide Document No.3848/68-69, Book-1, V-1907, Pages 87-89, registered in the office of the Sub Registrar, Kanakapura, In this connection, We have lodged a Complaint Lost Report No.2144497/2026 dated 07.04.2026 with the Bangalore City Police with regard to the loss of Original Sale Deed dated 09.06.1968

If any Person/s who find it, are requested to return at below mentioned Address within **7 DAYS** from the date of publication of this notice. In the event of not getting any information about the said original sale deed within the time frame mentioned herein, My Client shall act upon the Certified Copy of the aforesaid Sale Deed, as if, the same is the original.

Sd/- Mahesha HK, Advocate
Office No.12, 1st Flr, J.J. Complex, No.163, 18th Cross Road, Govindaraja Nagar Ward, MC Lyt, Vijayanagar, Bengaluru-560040
Dtd:07/04/2026 M: 98458-91477/
Place:B'lore Client Mob: 93435-31234

TUNGABHADRA BOARD: TB DAM
e-Procurement Short Term Tender Notice
IFB Nos.01/2026-27 to 11/2026-27 DT.08.04.2026

Tender for **11 Nos. of Works** in respect of HW & HLC Division, TB Dam and LLC Division, Ballari under 'Service Category" are invited through `e-Procurement'.

Bid Document downloading Start Date & Time:	:	09.04.2026 at 12:00 PM
Bid Document downloading End Date & Time:	:	16.04.2026 at 3:00 PM
Bid Submission End Date & Time:	:	16.04.2026 at 5:30 PM
Date of opening of Technical / Commercial Stage:	:	16.04.2026 at 6:00 PM

Further details can be seen @ **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in**

Ph: 08394 - 259114
Email: seibtbb@yahoo.com

Sd/- **Superintending Engineer**
I.B, TB Board, TB Dam

BANGALORE MYSORE INFRASTRUCTURE CORRIDOR AREA PLANNING AUTHORITY
No.5, 2nd Floor, Looplane, Race Course Road, Bengaluru - 560009.
Phone: 080-22341230/35 E-mail: bmicapa@gmail.com

No:BMICAPA/CLU-02/118/2025-26/29 Date: 07.04.2026

PUBLICATION

[UNDER SEC 14(A) OF KTCP ACT, 1961]

Sri Naveen Kumar C.S S/o Sulalaiah, Sri. D. Timmaiah S/o Late Chikka Dasappa and Sri Krishnamurthy S/o Late Chikka Dasappa have applied to this Authority seeking Change of land use in Sy.No.61/2 extent of 01Acre-31Guntas, Sy.No.63/14 extent of 00Acre-01Guntas from **"Agriculture"** Zone to **"Residential"** purpose. Further the land bearing Sy.No.218 is shown as a "stream (halla)" in the village map and in the master plan. However, as per letter dated: 10.10.1985 of the Tahsildar, Channapatna Taluk, the said land was originally Government land. Subsequently disposed of for cultivation and Occupancy rights were granted, thereby converting it into private holding land and said land has since been granted in favour of the applicant in view of the above, the applicant has requested that the classification of the said land as halla in the Master Plan be rectified under cartographical error correction. The applicants further submit that the proposal for change of land use from Agriculture to Residential and Rectification of halla under the cartographical error is in the public interest as mentioned below.

1. By developing the layout in the said land, the poor and middle Class people will get the sites for reasonable price.
2. During the development works of the layout, there will be opportunity of employment for local labourers.
3. Surrounding areas will be developed by developing the layout in the above said lands.
4. By development of planned layout, the public are benefited with the civic amenities such as good roads, UGD, electrical facilities and parks, etc.

Objections, if any, are invited from the public, any person may file his/her objection to Member Secretary, BMICAPA, Bengaluru in writing to the above address mentioned in this publication within 15 days from this notice. Any objections received after stipulated time will not be considered.

Sd/- Member Secretary,
BMICAPA, Bengaluru.

DIPR/CP/111/MAA/26-27

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
ZILLA PANCHAYATH, KOPPAL. THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL DRINKING WATER & SANITATION DIVISION, KOPPAL

NO.RWS/Dn/KPL/OUTSOURCE/2026-27/18 Date: 08/04/2026

KPPP NOTIFICATION
Short Term Double Cover System (Second Call)

On Behalf of Governor of Karnataka, Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water Supply & sanitation Division, Koppal Invites e-Tender for OUTSOURCE ENGINEERS & Staff Work The eligible bidders are requested to submit the Bid in Double Cover System through kppp portol mode through portol http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

General Information: 1) Contractor should submit the Tender Bid Documents through Online Only. 2) All Documents Should be Scanned and Upload during the period of Applying Tender through Online Only. 3) EMD Amount Should be Submitted Through Online Only 4) Two Cover Tender Called.

If any More Information Contractor should Contact this office or wide email id:eerwsskpl@gmail.com in Office Hours and Tenders will be Download from **10/04/2026** Tender Processing Fee : As Per KPPP Portol Tender Downloading Date: **10/04/2026** Time: 10:00 AM to **17/04/2026** 16:00 Hours Tender receiving Date and Time: **10/04/2026** Time: 10:00 AM to **17/04/2026** 16:00 Hours Technical Bid Opening Date and Time: **18/04/2026** Date:16:30 Hours Financial Bid Opening after approval of the technical bid from the Competent Authority **21/04/2026** or After Obtaining the Technical Bid Approval from the Competent Authority

The Contractors should produce the Original Documents within 8 days from the open of the tender. If failed such Contractor candidature will not be considered.

DIPR/Koppal/15/KSMCA/2026-27

Sd/-Executive Engineer,
R.D.W & S .Division, Koppal

KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY & DRAINAGE BOARD
KALABURAGI ZONE, KALABURAGI
Office of the Chief Engineer KUWS & D Board, Kalaburagi Zone,
"Jalbhavan", Rajapur, Kusnoor Road, Kalaburagi – 585105. Tel : 08472-220817,
Fax : 08472-260818 E-mail ID : kwbceklb14@gmail.com

No. KWB/CE(K)/TEC/Ydg NGR/2026-27/08 Date : 04-04-2026

:: NOTICE INVITING TENDER ::

1) Detail of Work: Supply, erection, electrification and commissioning of 2 No's of 345 HP or Suitable HP DeepWell Turbine Pump set with discharge of 291 LPS (1047.09 cum/hr) against 60mts head along with allied accessories, Providing and laying of RCC Columns, beam & fixing Gate at entrance of Jackwell site and Providing electrification works in Jackwell near Gurusanagi Bridge cum Barrage under Nagarothan (Municipality) Phase-3 at Yadgir city. (Lumpsum-No variation) **(Work Indent No : KUWSDB/2025-26/EL / WORK_INDENT499)**, 2) Amount of Estimate: **Rs. 177.32 Lakhs (Excluding GST),** 3) Eligibility of Contractor: Eligible Contractors. 4) Details of Tender application amount and EMD amount: Rs. 2,66,000/-, 5) Period of Completion: 06 (Six) Months, 6) Date and Time for commencement of downloading of tender documents from the e-procurement portal: 08-04-2026 after 13:00 Hours, 7) Date & Time of Pre-Bid Meeting: 15-04-2026 at 11:30 Hours, 8) Last Date and Time for receipt of Tenders: 22-04-2026 Up to 17:30 Hours, 9) Date and Time for Opening of Tender : 24-04-2026 After 11:00 Hours, 10) Addl. information: Office of the Chief Engineer KUWS & D Board, Kalaburagi Zone, "Jalbhavan", Rajapur, Kusnoor Road, Telephone : 08472-220817 E-mail ID : kwbceklb14@gmail.com, 11) Address of E-portal: www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in

DIPR/Kalaburagi/19/KSMC&A/2026-27

Sd/- Chief Engineer
KUWS & D Board, Kalaburagi Zone, Kalaburagi

BANGALORE RURAL ZILLA PANCHAYATH
Office of Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Bangalore Rural, Anand Rao Circle, Bangalore - 560009.

No: EE/PRED/BNG(R)/TND No-01/TS/37/2026-27 Date: 08/04/2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION No: 01/2026-27
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Short Term Tender is invited through K.P.P Portal by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D, Bangalore Rural, under Hon'ble Chief Minister's Infrastructure Development Scheme (CMIDP) Head of Account. The Work details can be obtained from the K.P.P. Portal **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).** The Tender Documents can be obtained and submitted on or before **16/04/2026 upto 4.30 P.M.** Further details contact this office during office working hours.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division,
Bangalore Rural Dist. Bangalore

DIPR/CP/SMCL/106/2026-27

BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer (QA/QC), BSCC, Fourth Floor, Jayanagar Commercial Complex, 30th Cross Road, 9th Main Road, Jayanagar 4th Block, Bengaluru-11

No. EE(QA/QC)/Z-2/BSCC/TEND/01/25-26/Call-3 Date : 08-04-2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (CALL-3)
(Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPP Portal only)

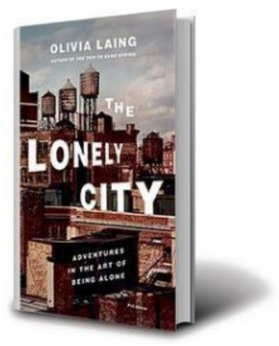
The Bengaluru South City Corporation (BSCC) Quality Assurance/Quality Control division invites Request for Proposal from interested persons/firms those **who have done similar type of work for Consultancy Services for Project Management including Supervision, Quality control (PMC)** for the below work through KPP Portal by the Executive Engineer (QA/QC), BSCC on behalf of the Commissioner, BSCC Bengaluru.

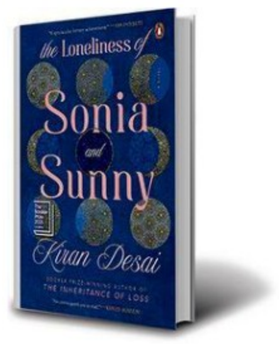
Sl.	Name of the Work
1	Providing PMC Services including Supervision, Quality control for Improvements to existing asphalted road by resurfacing with proper camber, shoulder formation, side drain improvement and road safety measures to selected arterial, sub arterial and other important roads under Capital Support for Special Infra Projects (CSSIP) (Comprising of 4 works in GO BSCC Sl no. 34,50,49,78) Package no CSSIP BH-03 (Call-3). **Project Cost :** Rs. 1000.00 Lakhs. **EMD Amount :** Rs. 37,500/-

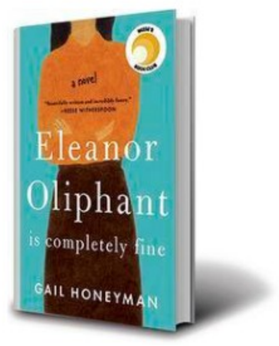
Calendar of events: (1) Tender Documents may be downloaded through KPP Portal **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** under login for Contractors from **09-04-2026 (2)** Pre-bid Meeting : **13.04.2026 at 11:30AM** Office of the Executive Engineer (QA/QC),BSCC, Fourth Floor, Jayanagar Commercial Complex, 30th Cross Road, 9th Main Road, Jayanagar 4th Block, Bengaluru-11 **(3)** Last Date & Time for receipt of Tenders : **16-04-2026 upto 4:00 PM (4)** Opening of Technical Bid : **17.04.2026 at 04:30 PM (5)** Validity of Tender : 90 Days from last date of receipts of Tender

Sd/- Executive Engineer (QA/QC) Zone-2,
Bengaluru South City Corporation

BIBLIOGRAPHY







GETTY IMAGES

Why loneliness, a recurring theme in literature, is difficult to comprehend

Across memoir, fiction and film, loneliness emerges as one of the most private human experiences, but it is also one of the most universal feelings often overlooked, as these three writers underscore

Debasree Purkayastha

In an age of constant connection, loneliness has emerged as a defining paradox. Dominating headlines, it is frequently attributed to social media addiction and the perils of urban life.

In its report UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-30), the World Health Organization states, "Social isolation and loneliness are widespread. Around 16% of people worldwide – one in six – experience loneliness." It comes as little surprise, then, that what is often described as a "loneliness epidemic" continues to dominate discussions about mental health on social media and news platforms.

Loneliness has also been a recurring theme in art – take, for instance, the heartwarming film *Files*, screened at the Berlin International Film Festival 2026. Literature is no exception.

Running deep

The philosophical and personal narrative by British author Olivia Laing in *The Lonely City: Adventures in the Art of Being Alone* draws from the time she lived in New York. She writes, "Loneliness is difficult to confess; difficult too to categorise. Like depression, a state with which it often intersects, it can run deep in the fabric of a person." We immediately get a sense of what to expect – an analysis of where loneliness stems from and its consequences, which linger in one's mental health and very existence.

The book looks at works of art that draw inspiration from loneliness. It explores the lives and works of Edward Hopper, including *Nighthawks*; Andy Warhol, the artist-activist of AIDS-ravaged 1980s New York; and Henry Darger. At one point, Laing reflects on Warhol's sentimental attachment to his subjects, writing: "He was painting things to which he was sentimentally attached, even loved; objects whose value derives not because they're rare or individual but because they are reliably the same."

Through these artistes, the author delves into the causes of loneliness and the shame that often accompanies it. Laing accurately describes the feeling of being lonely – words that ring true and stay with the reader long after the book is finished: "What does it feel like to be lonely? It feels like being hungry: like being hungry when everyone around you is readying for a feast. It feels shameful and alarming and over time these feelings radiate outwards, making the lonely person increasingly isolated, increasingly estranged."

Layers of loneliness

Kiran Desai's *The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny* explores the many layers of loneliness through fictional characters. The Booker-shortlisted novel traces the journeys of two individuals, Sonia and Sunny, negotiating distance, displacement, and belonging. Yet, this is not an entirely bleak story. Desai, who won the Man Booker Prize for *The Inheritance of Loss*, weaves in moments of hope as her character Sonia embarks on a path of self-reflection and discovery.

The book opens with a phone call: Sonia's father informs his parents in Allahabad that Sonia, a college student in Vermont in the U.S., is depressed and lonely. Her grandparents struggled to comprehend how someone young and living abroad could possibly feel that way. It is a reaction many encounter in real life – a confusion that often arises in conversations about loneliness, a feeling that is difficult to articulate.

In a conversation with the author during The Hindu Lit for Life, Desai spoke about how her understanding of loneliness evolved as she explored it alongside solitude while writing the book. "It is probably essential to artistic life," she said.

Silent and isolating

While some narratives trace loneliness with philosophical distance, others plunge into its most unsettling depths, as Gail Honeyman does in *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine*.

Loneliness is not always contemplative – sometimes it is isolating, corrosive, and dangerously silent. The novel begins on a bleak note. Eleanor Oliphant, a socially awkward and isolated woman living in Glasgow and working a routine office job, insists she is "completely fine."

Yet beneath the rigid routines and solitary weekends lies a deep, unaddressed loneliness. Over time, she slowly finds her footing. As the author reminds us, "It is never too late, for any of us." It is a poignant and joyful message.

The book compels us to reflect on ourselves. Have we, as a society, been conditioned to ignore the neighbour who has just moved in, or the awkward colleague who has relocated from another State and knows no one? Do we pause long enough to invite someone for a coffee or a movie? It is a stark reality check – a mirror to a world where we cling to our close circles, hesitant to pull up an extra chair at the table.

Across memoir, fiction, and film, loneliness emerges as one of the most private human experiences, but it is also one of the most universal. As Olivia Laing writes, it is "difficult to confess." And yet, in speaking about it, in art, in literature, in conversation, we begin to loosen its grip.

If stories teach us anything, loneliness thrives in silence but softens in recognition.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

On the birth anniversary of Rahul Sankrityayan, the polymathic scholar, here is a quiz exploring his life and literary legacy

Prathmesh Kher

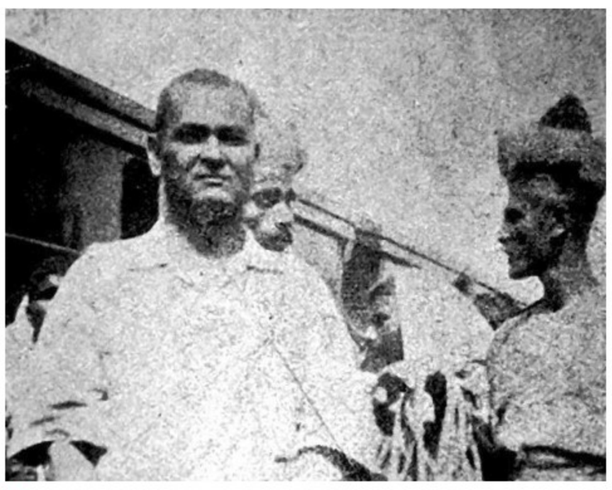
QUESTION 1
What was Rahul Sankrityayan's birth name?

QUESTION 2
Which celebrated work of historical fiction by Rahul Sankrityayan traces the evolution of human society through stories spanning thousands of years?

QUESTION 3
Which Rahul Sankrityayan work won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1958?

QUESTION 4
Which 1934 work of Sankrityayan's introduces readers to Marxist historical interpretation?

QUESTION 5
Rahul Sankrityayan spent time teaching Sanskrit at which major foreign academic institution?



Visual Question:
This photograph of Rahul Sankrityayan was taken after his arrest during which peasant movement in Bihar? PUBLIC DOMAIN

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Name the three ethnic groups in the East African country. **Ans: Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa**
2. These groups share a common ethnolinguistic background. What language family do they belong to? **Ans: Bantu languages**
3. Before independence, Rwanda was colonised by which two European powers? **Ans: Germany and Belgium**
4. The long-standing tension between the majority Hutus and minority Tutsis escalated into a civil war in 1990. Which Tutsi rebel group formed by exiles in Uganda emerged victorious? **Ans: Rwandan Patriotic Front**
5. Media was used to sow the seeds of future violence in the final years of the internal war. State-owned _____ provided initial support to Radio RTLM, which spread hate propaganda against the Tutsis. Fill in the blank with the name of the radio station. **Ans: Radio Rwanda**
6. An assassination on April 6 set off the genocide. Hutu extremists blamed Tutsi rebels (a claim still disputed) and launched a coordinated campaign of violence. Identify the designations of the two leaders killed in the plane attack. **Ans: Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi**
Visual: Name the Ugandan leader who has remained in power since then. **Ans: Yoweri Museveni**
Early Birds: K.N. Viswanathan | Tamal Biswas | Abhay Krishan | Ambarin Aslam | Shikha Singh

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

"What is so funny?"
"Sujatha and Ramesh had another fight. She accused him of being late for everything. Ramesh got really angry...."
"...that is really funny. It's a case of the pot calling the kettle black."
"What does it mean?"
"It's an instance of a person with a fault accusing another person of having the same fault."
"It's criticising another person for faults which you yourself have."
"Exactly! Let me give you an example. When Shashi accused her boss of being corrupt, it was a case of the pot calling the kettle black."
"My cousin often tells me that I am terribly short-tempered. Now, that's the pot calling the kettle black. How does that sound?"
"Sounds good to me. My boss often accuses us of not being hardworking - talk about the pot calling the kettle black!"
"Your boss isn't very hardworking?"
"He hardly works, if you ask me!"
"How is he doing, by the way?"
"He's driving everyone potty."
"...driving everyone potty?"
"When someone 'drives you potty', he/she drives you crazy. It is an expression used in informal contexts. Here's an example. The noise from my neighbour's house sometimes drives me potty."
"My cousin left her three-year-old daughter with us for a couple of hours. The kid drove everyone at home potty."
"Some of the things that our potty politicians say drive me potty."
"Does it mean crazy politicians?"
"Excellent! When you say that someone is 'potty', it means that you think that they are crazy or foolish. It can be used with things, as well."
"Can I say, going for a jog at two o'clock in the afternoon is a potty idea?"
"Only someone who is potty would go for a jog in this kind of heat."
"Anyway, why is your boss driving everyone potty?"
"He feels that we are letting the company go to pot. When you let a place or an organisation 'go to pot', you don't do anything to take care of it and...."
"...you don't take care of it, and as a result, the place becomes run down."
"Exactly! My uncle believes that our politicians are responsible for letting this great country of ours go to pot."
"I am sure that many people would agree with him. It's sad to see many of our national monuments go to pot. But tell me, why doesn't the government take care of its monuments?"
"You need pots of money to take care of monuments."
"Does it mean, lots of money?"
"Yes. An assistant manager in our company was making pots of money by informing a rival company what we were up to."
"What did your Chairman do?"
"He asked him to leave. But the assistant manager wants his wife to be appointed in his place."
"He must be potty to make such a request. How can he...."
"...the Chairman is really worried."
"But why? It's the assistant manager who is in the wrong."
"...the assistant manager is planning to ask Laloo Prasad Yadav to represent him!"
"Good grief! That will definitely drive the judge potty."
Published in The Hindu on March 28, 2000

Word of the day

Gobbledygook:
Complicated language that is difficult to understand

Synonyms: jargon, nonsense, gibberish

Usage: *The report was full of technical gobbledygook.*

Pronunciation:
newsth.live/gobbledygook

International Phonetic Alphabet: /gɒbəldigu:k/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

West Asia conflict hits coffee prices

'Prices, which remained stable during the harvesting season from Dec. 2025 to Feb. 2026, began to fall soon after the conflict escalated in March'

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

Coffee growers in Karnataka are withholding their produce as prices have declined sharply over the past month, following disruptions triggered by the ongoing conflict in West Asia.

Planters say prices, which remained stable and favourable during the harvesting season from December 2025 to February 2026, began to fall soon after the conflict escalated in March. The decline, estimated at nearly 20% to 30%, has been attributed to disruptions in export markets, particularly in the Gulf and West Asian region, a key destination for Indian coffee.

Poovanna B.B., a small coffee planter from Virajpet in Kodagu, said that he had completed harvesting in February but has been unable to sell his produce due to the sudden drop in prices.

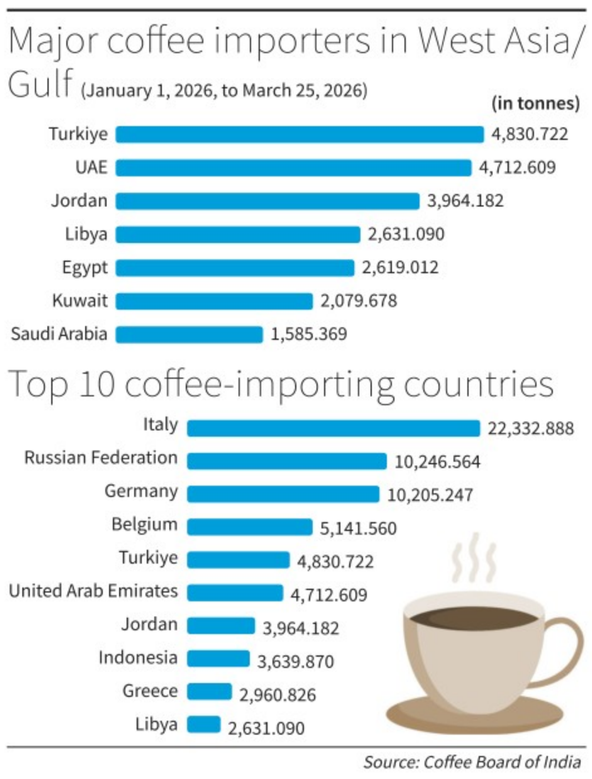
"We were getting good prices during the harvest season, but after the West Asia conflict began, prices dropped significantly. Now, our coffee is lying in the godown as we are reluctant to sell at such low rates," he said. Mr. Poovanna added that the situation has put growers in a difficult position, as they depend on timely sales to fund plantation activities. "We need money for fertilisers and to pay labourers for works like pruning, which begins this month. With prices so low, it is difficult to proceed with these essential activities," he said.

A small coffee planter from Virajpet in Kodagu says that he completed harvesting in February but has been unable to sell his produce due to the sudden drop in prices. K. MURALI KUMAR

Planters in Chikkamagaluru also shared similar concerns. Ravindra Kumar, a grower from Masagali village in Chikkamagaluru, said that many estate owners are being forced to sell their produce at lower prices despite incurring losses, as they have to repay bank loans taken for plantation activities.

Loan repayments

"This is the time when we usually sell our produce, clear our annual loans, and use the remaining income for maintenance and household expenses. But with such low prices, we are not making any profit. Still, we have no option but to sell, as loan repayments cannot be delayed," he said.



Source: Coffee Board of India

According to export data from the Coffee Board of India for the period between January 1 and March 25, West Asia and Gulf countries continue to account for a significant share of India's coffee exports. Turkiye imported 4,830.722 tonnes during the period, closely followed by the United Arab Emirates at 4,712.609 tonnes.

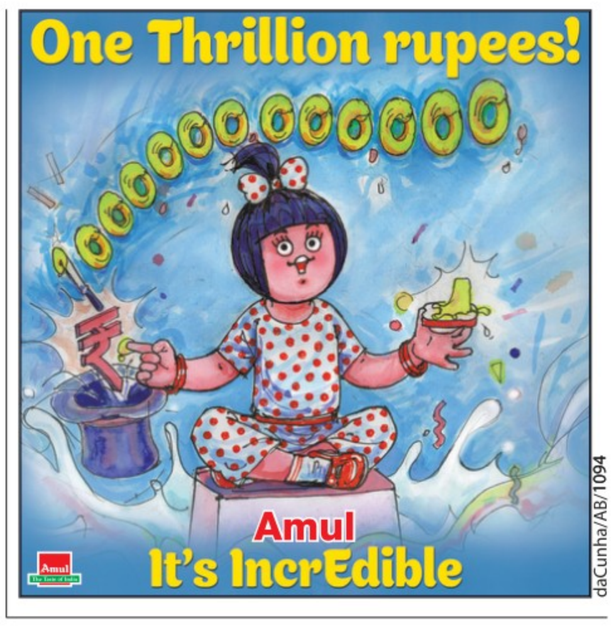
Jordan imported 3,964.182 tonnes, while Libya (2,631.090 tonnes), Egypt (2,619.012 tonnes), Kuwait (2,079.678 tonnes), and Saudi Arabia (1,585.369 tonnes) were among other major buyers in the region. Despite the current price slump, overall export volumes have shown growth. India exported 1,20,874 tonnes of coffee between January 1 and March 25 this year, compared to 97,667 tonnes during the same period last year.

Largest destination

Europe continues to dominate as the largest destination for Indian coffee. Italy remains the top importer with 22,332.888 tonnes, followed by the Russian Federation (10,246.564 tonnes) and Germany (10,205.247 tonnes). Belgium, Turkiye, and the UAE also feature among the leading importers.

However, growers say that higher export volumes have not translated into better returns at the farm level due to prevailing geopolitical uncertainties. "With prices remaining unstable, we are now adopting a wait-and-watch approach, hoping for a recovery in the coming weeks.

Until then, we continue to hold on to our produce, even as financial pressures mount,"said Mr. Poovanna.



Launch date of first uncrewed mission of Gaganyaan to be announced soon: ISRO

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairperson V. Narayanan said that the launch date for the first uncrewed mission of Gaganyaan would be announced soon.

The HLVM3 G1/OM1 mission, which is the first uncrewed mission of Gaganyaan, was scheduled to be launched in the first quarter of 2026. However, it has been delayed.

"As you are aware, based on guidelines, direction and announcement made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we are working on the Gaganyaan programme. Before going for the crewed mission, three uncrewed missions are targeted. Right now, we are working on the first uncrewed mission. All activities are going well, the timeframe will be announced in a couple of days," Dr. Narayanan told reporters on Wednesday, on the sidelines of the International Conference on Spacecraft Mission Operations.

No shortage of auto LPG, says govt. amid reports of long queues at bunks

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amid growing concerns among autorickshaw drivers over long queues at LPG bunks, the Karnataka government has claimed that there is no shortage of supply and urged the public not to fall prey to rumours.

In a statement, the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department said reports claiming long queues of autorickshaws outside fuel stations are misleading and largely driven by misinformation. The department advised auto owners and drivers not to panic and to ignore unverified claims regarding fuel availability.

Govt. acknowledges

The government acknowledged that there has been a disruption in supply from private auto LPG companies. However, it said public sector oil marketing companies- Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)- have stepped in to bridge the gap.

According to official data, these three companies initially supplied 56.67 tonnes of auto LPG and are currently supplying 83.58 tonnes daily to retail outlets across the State. Over the past five days, supply has remained consistent, with 87.78 tonnes on April 2, 86.05 tonnes on April 3, 84.80 tonnes on April 4, 94.11 tonnes on April 5, and 83.58 tonnes on April 6.

Several areas hit

Despite these assurances, parts of Bengaluru have witnessed disruptions in auto services, with drivers reporting long waiting times at LPG stations. In several areas, autos are not running properly while queues of autorickshaws continue to be seen stretching for kilometres especially at night, as drivers wait for hours amid uncertainty over fuel availability.

Drivers said the situation has affected their daily earnings, as many depend on LPG as a cost-effective alternative to petrol and diesel. The ongoing conflict in West Asia, which has impacted global fuel logistics, is believed to have contributed to the disruption in supply chains.

"For many autorickshaw drivers, the situation is worsening with each passing day. Our workday now begins well before sunrise, but instead of picking up passengers, we are forced to spend hours going from one fuel station to another in search of LPG. This is severely affecting our daily earnings and livelihoods," said Devraj K., a auto driver from Banashankari.

Export uncertainty hits mango trade; farmers explore alternative options

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Farmers in Kolar, Bengaluru South and Chickballapur districts in Karnataka, who used to get advance orders for export of mangoes to countries like the UAE, have been hit this year due to continuing tensions in West Asia. Growers say this has disrupted their usual export flow, forcing them to look at other markets, like the U.K. and Canada.

This season, production is better compared to the last two years. As a result, traders and growers say, prices are unlikely to rise sharply.

Mahantesh P. from Chickballapur said he registered as an exporter with the Horticulture Department this year to avoid middlemen. He said the usual export chain was affected due to the war in West Asia, and they are now trying to explore markets in the U.K. and Canada. Mangoes have already started arriving in city markets, but traders say supplies have not yet reached full capacity. In the next 10 days, more varieties from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and parts of Karnataka are expected to arrive. At present, both supply and demand remain low.

Mangoes have already started arriving in city markets, but traders say supplies have not yet reached full capacity. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Traders said exporters are now being asked to pay more than 50% advance in cash due to the uncertainty. "Many of our regular buyers did not turn up this year. Some who came did not confirm orders, and a few did not make payments," a trader said.

In 2025, the crop was hit by untimely showers in January. This year, supply is better, and prices are expected to remain moderate. Selvan Kumar M., a trader in Bengaluru, said overripe mangoes usually go to pulp industries during the end of the season, mainly in Tamil Nadu, but rising transport costs and uncertain demand are concerns. "Right now, the focus is on getting better returns from local sales," he added.

"Prices are currently steady, with Alphonso at ₹280-300 per kg, Raspuri and Sindhura at around ₹250, and Banganapalle at ₹180-200," said Sridhar M. from K.R. Market in Bengaluru. He added that prices of varieties available through the season may go down further, affecting margins.

'Over 4,600 objects placed in orbit in 2025 after 315 space launches'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The year 2025 saw 315 successful space launches globally, with about 4,651 objects placed in orbit. According to the Indian Space Situational Assessment Report (ISSAR) for 2025 released on Wednesday, a maximum number of payloads were deployed during 2025.

The report stated that 4,651 objects were launched to orbits and 1,911 re-entered the atmosphere with a net annual growth of 74.5%.

27 satellites operational

With regard to the Indian space assets in 2025, eight satellites were launched and four rocket bodies were placed in orbit. The report said that 12 Indian objects re-entered the atmosphere.

It added that the IRNSS-1 D satellite was decommissioned 600 km above geosynchronous orbit. In total, there are 86 Indian satellites in orbit of which 27 are operational, 23 are defunct (still in orbit), and 36 decayed.

Among the Indian rocket bodies, three Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM-3) are still in orbit and five are decayed; four Small Satellite Launch Vehicles are decayed; four Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicles (GSLV) are in orbit and 10 have decayed, and 42 Polar Satellite Launch Vehicles (PSLV) are in orbit and 19 have decayed.

The report also said that 563 and 519 orbital manoeuvres were carried out in low-earth orbit and geostationary orbit, respectively.

Fourteen collision avoidance measures were carried out in low-earth orbit along with four in geostationary orbit, the ISSAR report said.

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, APR. 09
RISE 06:11 SET 18:32
RISE 00:00 SET 11:22

FRIDAY, APR. 10
RISE 06:10 SET 18:32
RISE 00:44 SET 12:14

SATURDAY, APR. 11
RISE 06:10 SET 18:32
RISE 01:31 SET 13:08

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	15
Mysuru	35	20
Bengaluru	35	23

Bengaluru Today
32°C The weather will be dry. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
33°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be warm. Night also will be pleasant. Dry weather to occur.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2026
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

72-year-old man from Shivamogga dies of Kyasanur Forest Disease

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

People visiting forest areas have been advised to apply tick-repellent oil on their hands and legs

A 72-year-old man from Sagar taluk died of Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD) at a private hospital in Manipal, Udupi district, on Wednesday.

The man, who complained of vomiting and diarrhoea, first sought treatment at a private hospital in Sagar on April 5, from where he was referred to the taluk general hospital.

His blood sample was collected there, and laboratory tests the next day confirmed that he was infected with KFD. He was subsequently referred to a private hospital in Manipal the same day.

District Health Officer K.S. Nataraj told *The Hindu* that the patient died in Manipal on Wednesday. "The exact cause of death will be known after the death audit," he said.

Tick-borne disease

The KFD is a tick-borne disease, and people living near forest areas are particularly vulnerable to infection. The district administration and officials of the Health and Family Welfare Department are conducting awareness campaigns on preventing its spread. People visiting forest areas have been advised to apply tick-repellent oil on their hands and legs.

REMEMBRANCE

Sri. H. Basavaiah, IAS (R)
10th July, 1934 - 09th April, 2025

Those we love don't go away,
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen, unheard, but always near,
Still loved, still missed and very dear.

You live on in our hearts and thoughts forever.

Smt. Rajamma
Daughters, Sons-in-law, Grandchildren

VIDYA VIKAS EDUCATIONAL TRUST (R), MYSURU
VIDYA VIKAS INSTITUTE OF LEGAL STUDIES
Affiliated to Karnataka State Law University
APPOINTMENT NOTIFICATION
Application are invited from qualified and eligible candidates for the post of
PRINCIPAL
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA: AS PER KSLU NORMS
Email: recruitment@vidyavikas.edu.in
Aspirants looking forward to passionately contribute and grow may send your resume to the Email above and address given below on or before 20.04.2026
HR Department, #127-128, Mysuru-Bannuru Road, Alanahalli Post
Mysuru - 570028
Mob : 9686677378

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath Chandrasekar (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

Groundwater extraction in State saw reduction in 2025

Releasing the 2025 Groundwater Assessment Report, Minister Boseraju says the gains have been made owing to good rainfall, policy interventions, and large-scale water conservation initiatives implemented over the past two years

B.S. Satish Kumar
BENGALURU

Karnataka has recorded a significant decline in groundwater usage along with a notable increase in annual recharge capacity, reflecting the impact of sustained water conservation efforts and good rainfall, according to Minister for Minor Irrigation, Science and Technology N.S. Boseraju.

Releasing the 2025 Groundwater Assessment Report here on Wednesday, the Minister said the gains had been made owing to good rainfall, policy interventions, and large-scale water conservation initiatives implemented over the past two years.

Making a progress: The overall groundwater extraction reduced from 68.44% in 2024 to 66.49% in 2025. FILE PHOTO

Groundwater Assessment Report-2025

- Karnataka's annual groundwater recharge capacity has increased from **18.74 billion** cubic metres (BCM) in 2024 to **19.28 BCM** in 2025
- The annual extractable groundwater resources have increased from 16.88 BCM in 2024 to **17.41 BCM** in 2025
- The improvement is being attributed to good rains and expansion of water conservation structures across the State
- Groundwater recharge through such structures increased by **29.11%** between 2024 and 2025
- The number of water conservation works increased from **3.15 lakh** in 2024 to **3.94 lakh** in 2025
- There is improvement in groundwater status in **11 taluks**
- **Chamarajanagar taluk** has improved from **'over-exploited'** to **'critical'** status. Taluks such as Athani, Channapatna, Molakalmuru, Ranebennur, Savanur, and Shiggaon have moved from **'semi-critical'** to **'safe'** status
- Domestic groundwater extraction has declined by **0.58%** due to increased reliance on surface water under **Jal Jeevan Mission**

Improved indicators

According to the report, overall groundwater extraction reduced from 68.44% in 2024 to 66.49% in 2025, indicating more responsible and sustainable usage patterns across the State.

Also, the annual groundwater recharge capacity has increased from 18.74 billion cubic metres (BCM) in 2024 to 19.28 BCM in 2025, while annual extractable groundwater resources rose from 16.88 BCM to 17.41 BCM.

The improvement has been driven largely by the expansion of water conservation structures across the State. Recharge through these structures increased by 29.11%, from 0.81 BCM to 1.04 BCM in a year.

Rural impact

The report indicates improvement in groundwater status across 11 taluks, with several regions moving to safer categories. Chamarajanagar taluk has improved from 'over-exploited' to 'critical'.

Domestic groundwater extraction has declined by 0.58%, from 1,21,731 hectare-metres in 2024 to 1,21,023 hectare-metres in 2025. Officials attributed this reduction to increased reliance on surface water under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

Mr. Boseraju said initiatives such as lake rejuvenation, year-round water supply through treated and surface water, sustained public awareness campaigns, and good rainfall have played a key role in reducing over-extraction and improving recharge.

"Instead of depending solely on the 120-day monsoon, we are ensuring water availability across all 365 days through scientific management. This has strengthened long-term water security for both farmers and urban residents," he said.

Digital Water Stack initiative

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Minister also announced the rollout of the Digital Water Stack initiative. Under this framework, the government will introduce space technology and AI-based satellite surveillance to obtain real-time data for continuous groundwater monitoring.

All set for polling in Bagalkot, Davangere South segments

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI

Personnel leaving for their designated polling stations from the mustering centre in Davangere on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The stage is set for polling for the byelections to Davangere South and Bagalkot Assembly constituencies on Thursday.

The bypolls were necessitated by the demise of two former Ministers H.Y. Meti and Shamanur Shivashankarappa, both of the Congress.

On Wednesday, a flurry of activities was witnessed at Government First Grade College in Sector No. 43 in Navanagar in Bagalkot and DRR School in Davangere, the designated mustering centres for the bypolls.

Poll officials and personnel were seen collecting and checking the EVMs, control and VVPAT units, and other polling material at the mustering centres.

They later left for their respective polling stations in the designated vehicles and reached the same by evening.

Elaborate security arrangements have already been made with senior police officials taking stock of the situation. Contingents of Central paramilitary forces have been deployed at the polling stations identified as critical.

In all, 284 polling stations have been set up in Davangere South and 322 in Bagalkot.

Bagalkot has a total of 2,59,797 voters [1,26,999 males, 1,32,775 females, and 23 others], while in Davangere South there are 2,31,072 voters [1,13,399 males, 1,17,690 females, and 43 others].

A total of 34 candidates are in the fray for the byelection, including nine in Bagalkot and 25 in Davangere South constituency.

In Davangere, one of the Congress rebels announced his retirement after the deadline for withdrawal of the nominations ended.

The Congress has fielded members of the families of Meti and Shivashankarappa. The Congress candidate for Bagalkot Umesh Meti is the son of Meti and Samarth Mallikarjun is the grandson of Shivashankarappa and son of Horticulture Minister S.S. Mallikarjun.

The BJP has fielded former MLA Viranna Charantimath in Bagalkot and Srinivas T. Dasakariyappa in Davangere South.

Voting is scheduled from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and before the start, the staff will conduct mock polling in the presence of polling agents of candidates between 5.30 a.m. and 7 a.m. to check any glitches.

'Ensure there is no drinking water shortage'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Priyank Kharge

As Karnataka is facing the peak summer heat, Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj and IT and BT Priyank Kharge on Wednesday directed Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of all zilla panchayats to take urgent and proactive measures to ensure that no village faces a shortage of drinking water during the summer months.

Chairing a videoconference from Bengaluru with ZP CEOs across the State, the Minister reviewed the preparedness of districts to address drinking water requirements and instructed officials to strictly adhere to the guidelines already issued to prevent any disruption in rural water supply. He noted that special funds have been released to districts to manage summer exigencies and emphasised that there should be no lapses in implementation.

Highlighting the status of purified drinking water units [RO plants] across Karnataka, the Minister stated that several units have become non-functional owing to reasons such as lack of water sources and inadequate maintenance mechanisms.

He directed officials to undertake a scientific assessment of all such units, examine their feasibility for revival, and submit detailed district-wise reports along with an actionable roadmap.

The Minister also instructed districts to ensure timely deployment of water tankers and utilisation of private borewells. He emphasised that there should be no delays in payments to tanker operators and borewell providers.

He instructed officials concerned to operationalise taluk-level helplines, as done in previous years, to address complaints.

Siddaramaiah accuses Election Commission of India of being 'selective and complicit'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has accused the Election Commission of India (ECI) of being "selective and complicit" in its approach whiletaking exception to it writing to the State government seeking details on the release of funds under the State's guarantee schemes in Davangere and Bagalkot districts, where byelections are scheduled.

Taking to social media, Mr. Siddaramaiah said, "This is not neutrality - this is complicity. When BJP or NDA governments act, the ECI looks the other way. But when Karnataka fulfils its promises, the same ECI becomes hyperactive. This double standard exposes a clear bias."

He further said, "In States like Maharashtra and Bihar, cash transfer schemes have been announced or fast-tracked just before elections, with direct financial benefits extended to voters. These are well-documented patterns. Yet, the ECI remained silent and allowed them to proceed without scrutiny."

Ongoing programmes

Clarifying on guarantee schemes, he said that guarantee schemes are not byelection-time announcements. "These are ongoing programmes of our government, implemented as part of the commitments made to the people during the 2023 Assembly elections. Funds are regularly transferred to beneficiaries in a transparent and structured manner, in accordance with scheme guidelines. This is governance - a direct investment in human dignity, household stability, and economic participation - not inducement."

He argued that "targeting Karnataka's guarantee schemes is not just political - it is anti-poor, anti-women, and anti-Karnataka."

HC upholds 'leave India notice' issued to U.S. national

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

FROM THE COURT

The High Court of Karnataka has dismissed a petition filed by a U.S. national who had challenged "leave India notice" issued under the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, after he was found engaged in business and commercial activities even though he was issued only a tourist visa.

Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum, dismissing the petition filed by Joseph Ignazzio Zambuto, a 45-year-old American citizen, observed that the documentary evidence unequivocally established that the petitioner had violated visa conditions.

The court noted that the petitioner initially entered India on August 1, 2025, on an e-tourist visa. However, during the subsistence of this visa, he allegedly engaged in commercial operations, including hiring personnel, disbursing salaries, entering contracts, and leasing premises, under the banner of "Etta Global Partners LLC", a company registered in Puerto Rico, U.S.

The court, relying on official documents, refused to accept the petitioner's contention that he went back on January 15, 2026, and returned to India on January 26 on a business visa as documents clearly showed that he was issued with e-visa and the passport endorsement described the nature of visit as "tourist visa", not a business visa.

"The contention urged by the advocate for the petitioner that notwithstanding such endorsement, the petitioner had in fact entered India on a business visa and that the authorities have erroneously stamped the same as a tourist visa, cannot be countenanced in the teeth of unimpeachable documentary evidence on record," the court observed.

Marriage and business

The court also noted that the petitioner, during his stay in India, had married an Indian-origin Mauritius woman, and started a structured business activity contrary to the visa norms.

BJP intensifies demand for Kharge's arrest

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A day after filing a complaint with the State police chief against AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge for alleged provocative remarks against the RSS and the BJP, the BJP members staged a protest in Bengaluru on Wednesday, demanding the filing of an FIR against Mr. Kharge and his arrest.

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy also sought the intervention of Union Home Minister Amit Shah in getting an FIR filed against the Congress stalwart.

The BJP Yuva Morcha members who staged the protest in Bengaluru took exception to the police not filing an FIR. Pointing out that the police have booked cases and filed FIRs in connection with provocative posts on social media, they wondered why the police were yet to act against Mr. Kharge.

इण्डियन ओवरसीज़ बैंक
Indian Overseas Bank
आपकी प्रगति का सच्चा साथी Good people to grow with
Information Technology Department
Central Office: 763, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002

Indian Overseas bank (IOB) invites bids for the following:

GOVERNMENT E – MARKET PORTAL – SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF 250 ALL IN ONE PC's.

BID NO: GEM/2026/B/7405670 DATED 06.04.2026

The Above RFP tender document is available and can be downloaded from the following websites **www.iob.bank.in** & **www.gem.gov.in** For Tender details and future amendments, if any, keep referring to the following website **www.gem.gov.in**

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Sir C.V. Ramannagar Division, 8th Cross, 12th A Main Road, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagara, Bengaluru-560038

No.: EE/CVR/KPPP/01/2026-27 Date: 08.04.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through GOK KPPP Portal only) (Two Cover System)

Tenders on item rate basis are invited by the undersigned for the work mentioned below from the registered contractors of **Bengaluru Central City Corporation** or equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES or any State Government Organizations. **(Standard Tender Document - KW-04)**

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Annual Maintenance of Arterial and Sub-Arterial Roads inculding footpath in CV Raman Nagar. **Est. Cost in Lakhs: 125.00, EMD (in Rupees): 2,00,000.00.**
2	Annual Maintenance of Strom Water Drains in CV Raman Nagara Constituency. **Est. Cost in Lakhs: 384.50, EMD (in Rupees): 5,77,000.00.**

Calendar of events: (1) Tender Document can be downloaded from the GOK e-procurement website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** from **10.04.2026 (2)** Pre bid meeting will be held on **15.04.2026** at **3:30 p.m.** in the Office of the Executive Engineer, C.V. Ramannagara Division, 8th Cross, 12th A Main Road, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagara, Bengaluru. **(3)** Last date for uploading the filled proposals: **18.04.2026** upto **4:00 p.m. (4)** Date of opening of Technical proposals: **18.04.2026** at **4:30 p.m. (5)** Date of opening of Financial Proposals after approval of Technical Proposals through e-procurement. Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours or website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Sir C.V. Raman Nagar Division, Bengaluru Central City Corporation

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer (MPED & Transport), Ground Floor, Annexure-2 Building, NR Square, Bengaluru-560 002.
Email Id: eemped.bbmp@gmail.com

No: EE(MPED&Transport)/TEND/01/2026-27 Date: 08.04.2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER
(Through GOK KPPP Only) (Two Cover System)

The Executive Engineer (MPED&Transport) on behalf of the Commissioner, Bengaluru Central City Corporation (BCCC), invites Proposals (Technical and Financial) for appointing eligible reputed Service Providers for the services as given below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Project / Amount put to Tender (Rs. In Lakhs / Rupees) / EMD amount in Rs.
1	Providing Plumber, Carpenter and other Unskilled Labours to Bengaluru Central City Corporation office in GBA HO premises & PUB Building at MG Road mayohall, Bengaluru. Amount put to Tender **Rs. 21,51,368.61**, EMD **Rs.50,000/-.**
2	Providing Housekeeping Services to PUB Building Complex at MG Road Mayohall Bengaluru. Amount put to Tender **Rs. 99,96,836.83**, EMD **Rs.1,50,000/-.**

Calendar of Events :
(1) Availability of IFT/RFP Document in KPP portal:**09.04.2026 onwards. (2)** Last date for receipt of queries is **13.04.2026 up to 15:00 Hrs** in the through KPP Portal. **(3)** Date of Pre bid meeting at The Office of Exceutive Engineer(MPED& Transport)BCCC : **15.04.2026@ 15:00 (4)** Last Date for submission of Proposals: **17.04.2026 up to 16.00 hours. (5)** Date of Opening of Technical Proposals: **18.04.2026 after 16.30 hours. (6)** Opening of Financial Proposal will be **intimated to the Tenderers through mail/Phone.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer (MPED & Transport), BCCC

Karnataka Science and Technology Promotion Society
Dept.. Electronics, Information Technology, Bio-technology and Science & Technology GoK
"Room No.: 505, 5th Stage MS Building, Bengaluru-01
Ph/Fax: 080-26711166, E-mail: ksteps.dst@gmail.com

Date: 07-04-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP portal Only)

Karnataka Science and Technology Promotion Society (KSTePS), Bengaluru invites bids as per details given below:

Sl. No.	Indent No.	Particulars
1.	KSTePS/Udupi/ Thematic Gallery1/ 2025-26 dtd: 07.04.2026 ITBTST/2026-27/ SE0043	Tender for Curation, Design, Development, Fabrication, Installation and Commissioning of: 1) Aerospace Science and technology Gallery 2) Mysteries of Ocean Gallery at Dr. U. R. Rao Sub-Regional Science Centre Udupi, through KSTePS, Dept. of Electronics, Information Technology, Bio-technology and Science & Technology, GoK, Bengaluru, Karnataka.
2.	KSTePS/Udupi/ Thematic Gallery2/ 2025-26 dtd: 07.04.2026 ITBTST/2026-27/ SE0044	

The Bids will be received through **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**. tendering mode only. Details regarding participation in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**. Any details required in this regard can also be obtained from the Office of KSTePS during Office hours.

Last date for bid submission: **22-04-2026 upto 17.00 hrs.**

Sd/-
Managing Director

DIPR/CP/105/Adverto/2026-27

A BG-BGE

From Page One

MGNREGA: Centre yet to approve labour budget

Mr. Mahantappa added that while the wages are consistently delayed under the scheme, workers like him have no option as MGNREGA provides employment.

Unlike previous years when entire families would enroll under the scheme, many families told *The Hindu* that households are splitting up, with some members migrating to cities in search of stable work, while others staying back, continuing to seek employment under the scheme. In 2025-26, 39.39 lakh had availed themselves of work under the scheme. Though there has been decline in demand, due to factors like deletion of job cards, delayed wage payments and increased digitisation, workers like Lakshmi Raju, from Raichur, point out that for many households, MGNREGA remains the only steady source of income. "It brings us up to ₹30,000 per household," she said, adding that in several women-led households, MGNREGA wages, along with government pensions where available, are often the only sources of income.

Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Priyank Kharge said the Centre had indicated that VB-G RAM G, which was to come into effect from April 1, 2026, would be extended till the end of April and had asked States to submit estimates. "We submitted the estimates as required, but the labour budget is yet to be approved," he said. He added that if the framework had been ready, it should have been implemented from the start of the financial year.

NDA trying to buy votes, say Left, Cong. on Kerala poll eve

BJP rubbishes allegations; candidates spend the day meeting community groups and workers; Cong. continues to battle internal rift; key PCC official quits and declares support for Pinarayi

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Officials collect election material and voting machines from a centre in Thiruvananthapuram on Wednesday. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

Silent campaign on the eve of the Assembly election in Kerala on Wednesday was anything but silent.

Opposing campaigns indulged in muckraking in a last-minute bid to recast the electoral agenda to their advantage as the clock wound down to the voting day on Thursday.

Political sniping seemed fierce in battleground Assembly constituencies, where a few hundred votes could possibly tip an election, and the stakes are consequently high for the three alliances.

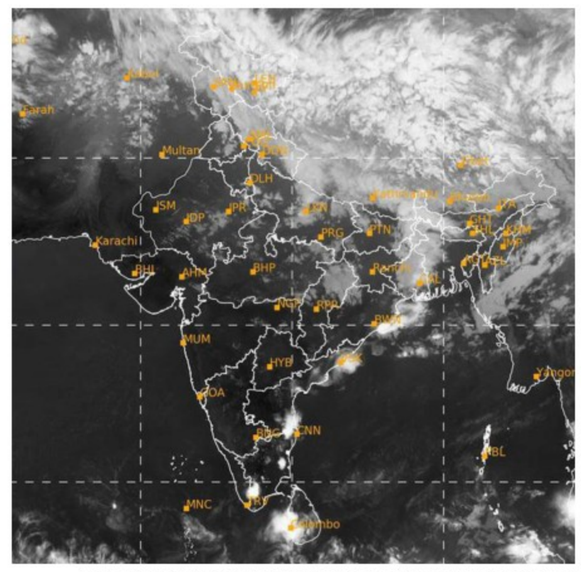
The ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the Opposition United Democratic Front (UDF) sought to gain a propaganda advantage over the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) on poll eve.

They accused the NDA of seeking to buy votes, especially of needy, ageing voters, chiefly in Palakkad, where the Congress sought to put the BJP candidate, Sobha Surendran, in the dock on charges of election fraud. The Congress and the ruling CPI(M) also raised similar allegations against the NDA in Thrissur. The BJP described the accusations as outlandish.

The Congress continued to battle internal dissensions on poll eve. Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) secretary D.V. Vinod Krishna resigned from the party and declared support for a "third Pinarayi Vijayan government." Another Congress dissident N.S. Nusoor sought to put the party on the defensive on the UDF's Wayanad rehabilitation scheme by petitioning the State Police Chief to investigate alleged misappropriation of funds collected from the public.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and West Bengal. Hot and humid weather likely at isolated places over Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Kerala

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	4	31.2	19.8	Kozhikode	—	34.9	24.7
Ahmedabad	—	35.8	24.7	Kurnool	—	40.5	26.3
Aizawl	13	29.9	16.2	Lucknow	5.3	27.0	18.8
Allahabad	0.8	30.8	20.4	Madurai	—	38.4	26.4
Bengaluru	—	35.2	22.0	Mangaluru	—	32.5	23.2
Bhopal	—	33.2	22.0	Mumbai	—	33.0	25.6
Bhubaneswar	11.2	34.8	22.8	Mysuru	—	36.0	19.0
Chandigarh	46	24.0	13.4	New Delhi	6	28.2	16.8
Chennai	—	37.5	27.6	Patna	0.2	29.0	24.2
Coimbatore	—	37.6	22.4	Port Blair	0.1	32.8	25.8
Dehradun	19	23.0	14.6	Puducherry	—	35.6	28.2
Gangtok	9	15.6	10.4	Pune	—	34.2	21.1
Goa	—	34.5	24.1	Raipur	—	38.1	24.0
Guwahati	9	30.4	17.8	Ranchi	—	31.8	17.6
Hubballi	—	37.0	21.0	Shillong	4	20.2	10.4
Hyderabad	—	37.4	23.0	Shimla	28	11.4	4.8
Imphal	—	26.3	14.5	Srinagar	2	11.8	8.8
Jaipur	6	28.6	17.6	Thiruvananthapuram	—	37.1	25.7
Kochi	—	31.6	26.8	Tiruchi	—	37.9	27.0
Kohima	—	22.0	12.0	Vijayawada	—	38.4	26.7
Kolkata	16	31.5	20.5	Visakhapatnam	—	34.4	27.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.43	.52	.40	53	120	
Bengaluru	.15	.48	.60	—	111	
Chennai	.15	.11	.32	28	62	
Delhi	.11	.22	.54	113	110	
Hyderabad	.17	.39	.17	69	86	
Kolkata	.18	.36	.39	41	56	
Lucknow	.10	.27	.38	59	87	
Mumbai	.3	.13	.24	37	117	
Pune	.—	.15	108	39	49	
Visakhapatnam	.32	.72	.16	61	109	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Singrauli, Madhya Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 196 indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Kohima, Nagaland recorded a healthy AQI score of 18

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

A.P. govt. withdraws nod for LuLu mall in Vijayawada

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government has withdrawn the in-principle approval granted to the LuLu Group International for construction of a mall in Vijayawada. State Advocate General Dammalapati Srinivas, on behalf of the Andhra Pradesh government, submitted to the Andhra Pradesh High Court on Wednesday that the government was withdrawing the in-principle approval.

The government had given in-principle approval for the construction of a mall on 4.15 acres of land in the Old Bus Stand area belonging to Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC), under the A.P. Tourism Land Allotment Policy 2024-29.

Four Bangladeshi nationals sentenced in human trafficking case by NIA court

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A special court of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has convicted and sentenced four Bangladeshi nationals in a transnational human trafficking case.

The convicted accused – Zakir Khan, Badal Houladar, Kabir Talukdar, and Mohammed Bachchu Gharami – were sentenced to three years of rigorous imprisonment by the NIA special court in Bengaluru. The court also imposed a fine of ₹20,000 on each of them, with an additional one-month jail term in case of default.

According to the NIA, the accused had illegally entered India from Bangladesh through border points, including Benapole, Jashore, and Akhaura. They later obtained Indian identity documents fraudulently and were operating a waste segregation business on the outskirts of Bengaluru.

Investigations revealed that the accused were also employing other trafficked Bangladeshi nationals in their business and had leased land to construct sheds for accommodating the victims.

The case was registered *suo motu* by the NIA in November 2023 after the agency busted a cross-border human trafficking racket based on intelligence inputs and sustained surveillance.

Subsequent nationwide searches led to the arrest of 12 accused, during which officials seized Bangladeshi identity documents, digital devices, forged Indian documents, and cash.

The NIA filed its chargesheet in February 2024 and arrested two additional accused in May 2024. The agency stated that further investigation is ongoing to dismantle the entire cross-border trafficking network.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
ZILLA PANCHAYATH, BELLARY
Office of the Executive Engineer, P.R.E. Division, Bellary.
No. EE/PRED/BLY/AE-1/Various Heads/2025-26/05 Dt. 04.04.2026.

Tender Notification (Through KPPP Portal only)

On behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka tenders are invited from the eligible contractors who have enrolled in Panchayath Raj Engineering Department for 01 works comprising of approved Building works under KMERC CEPMIZ Grant through KPPP portal.

ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ಹೆಸರು: Construction of new Anganwadis (97) and upgradation of old Anganwadis (106) in Ballari Taluk, Ballari District Indent no. RDPR/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT22778. ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಗಿಟ್ಟಿ/ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ.ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ): 3421.46

Contractors are required to submit the tender before **04-05-2026 at 4.30 PM** by uploading the relevant documents through KPPP portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** by downloading the formats for submission of tenders from **04-04-2026 to 04-05-2026 at 4.30 PM.** Tenders will be opened through KPPP portal on **05-05-2026 at 17.30 PM.** Any changes in the notification will be published KPPP website only. Accepting/rejection of tenders without assigning reason is reserved. Any details can be obtained in person at the office or through telephone No. 08392-266173.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division Ballari
DIPR/Ballari/2026-27/KSMCA/RO No/35

ಪುರಸಭೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ನವಲಗುಂದ–582208
ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ : ಧಾರವಾಡ, ರಾಜ್ಯ : ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ
Phone : 08380-229247,
Website: www.navalgundtown.mrc.gov.in
email ID: ka.navalagund.tmc@gmail.com
ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ:ಪುಸನ/ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ/ಟೆಂಡರ್/ವಹಿ/2026–27 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 08–04–2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
(ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಬ್ಲಿಕ ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ)

ನವಲಗುಂದ ಪುರಸಭೆಯಿಂದ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಪುರಸ್ಕೃತ ಅಮೃತ 2.0 ಅನುದಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ರೂ. **269.00** ಲಕ್ಷಗಳ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ ನಂ 1) DMA/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT56996 (ಇತರೆ), ನೇದ್ದರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯನ್ನು ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನ ಗೊಳಿಸಲು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಆದ್ಯಾದೇಶ 1999–2000 ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಆಕ್ಟ 2000ರ ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್‌ನ ನಿಯಮದನ್ವಯ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ : **07–05–2026** ರಂದು ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಬ್ಲಿಕ ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ದ್ವಿ–ಲಕೋಟೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಬ್ಲಿಕ ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಟೆಂಡರನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಇಚ್ಚಿಸುವ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಂದಾಯಿತರಾದ ಅಸಕ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು.

ಸೂಚನೆ : ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಬ್ಲಿಕ ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು ಮತ್ತು ಇತರೆ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಹಾಗೂ ಯಾವುದೇ ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿ ಅಥವಾ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಯನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಬ್ಲಿಕ ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/– (ಎಸ್.ಪಿ. ಪೂಜಾರ)
ಮುಖ್ಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಪುರಸಭೆ, ನವಲಗುಂದ
ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಧಾರವಾಡ/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/34/2026–27

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD
INVITATION FOR TENDER-Call-2
(Only Through KPP Portal)

BWSSB invites tender from eligible Contractors for the following work.

Office of the Chief Engineer (Kaveri),
5th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560009

Division	IFT Number	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & time for Opening of Tender
Kaveri-3	BWSSB/EE (K-3)/AEE(K-3)-1/2/3/11/2026-27 Dtd: 04.04.2026	Rs. 63,77,800/- / Rs.1,28,000/-	24.04.2026 upto 3:00 pm	27.04.2026 at 4:00 pm

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Kaveri-3)

The details regarding the tender and participation in the KPP portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/107/CCL/2026-27

READ
"SPORTSTAR
EVERY FORTNIGHT.
TO SUBSCRIBE, VISIT
www.thehindugroup.in/subscribe

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
PUBLIC WORKS, DEPT.
No. PWD/BGM/TND/TA/AE/2026-27/162 Date:08.04.2026

-ITEM RATE TENDER NOTIFICATION(KPP PORTAL):-

The Executive Engineer, PWD Belagavi Division Belagavi invites item ratetenders from the eligible contractors registered in KPP Portal in Public Works Department under KW-1,2,3 & 4 Standard tender documents for a work under 8443 Deposit Contribution, 4059 CMIDP Works, 5054 KRDCL Bridge Works, 4059 CMIDP-SCP/TSP Works, 3054 SH Maintenance, 3054 MDR Maintenance 2059 Dept. buildings repair/maintenance, 5054 SH Improvement, 3054 SH Bridge Maintenance, total 25 number of works with minimum and maximum tender amounts of Rs.16.05 Lakhs and Rs.472.00 Lakhs respectively and minimum and maximum EMD amount of Rs. 20,100/- and Rs.7,08,100/- Part-1:Tender receipt Date is on 17.04.2026 up to 4.30 PM , Technical Bid Opening Date is on 18.04.2026 after 4.45 PM Part-2: Tender receipt Date is on 27.04.2026 up to 4.30 PM and Technical Bid Opening Date is on 28.04.2026 after 4.45PM, Part-3:Tender receipt Date is on 30.04.2026 up to 4.30 PM , Technical Bid Opening Date is on 02.05.2026 after 4.45 PM. For more information contact the office of the undersigned and www.Kppp.karnataka.gov.in after 08.04.2026.(Note:1) If no bids received, 3 days One Time auto extension activated.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Public Works Department Belagavi Dn. Belagavi.
DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-61/KSMCA/2026-27

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೈಗಾರಿಕಾ ಪ್ರದೇಶಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ
(ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಅಧೀನ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ)
ವಿಶೇಷ ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ–2, ಕೆಐಎಡಿಬಿ(ಬಿಎಂಐಸಿಪಿ) ಮತ್ತು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ, ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ, ನಂ.14/3, 1ನೇ ಮಹಡಿ, ಮಹರ್ಷಿ ಅರವಿಂದ ಭವನ, ನೃಪತುಂಗ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು–560001,
ದೂ: 080–22236840, ಇ–ಮೇಲ್: slao1bmicp@kiadb.in

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಕೆಐಎಡಿಬಿ/ಎಲ್ಎಕ್ಯೂ/ಬೆಂ.ಗ್ರಾ.ನೆ/27/2026–27 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 07.04.2026

ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ನೋಟೀಸು

(ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೈಗಾರಿಕಾ ಪ್ರದೇಶಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾಯ್ದೆ 1966ರ ವಿಧಿ 28(4)ರ ಅನ್ವಯ)

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು, ಸೋಂಪುರ ಹೋಬಳಿ, **ಕೆ.ಜಿ.ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸಪುರ ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಸ.ನಂ. 7/2ರ ಪೈಕಿ 1–04.08 ಎಕರೆ** ಜಮೀನನ್ನು ಕೈಗಾರಿಕಾ ಸ್ಥಾಪನೆಗಾಗಿ ಕೆಐಎಡಿ ಕಾಯ್ದೆ ಕಲಂ 28(4)ರಡಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಅಂತಿಮ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಸಿಐ 95 ಎಸ್ಐಕ್ಯೂ 2025 ದಿ:17.01.2026 ರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯಪತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತಿಮ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ:27.01.2026 ರಂದು ಹೊರಡಿಸಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೈಗಾರಿಕಾ ಪ್ರದೇಶಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾಯ್ದೆ 1966ರ ಕಲಂ 28(4)ರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ವಿವರಿಸಿರುವ ಸ್ವತ್ತುಗಳು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ರೀತಿಯ ಋಣಭಾರಗಳಿಂದ ವಿಮುಕ್ತಗೊಂಡು ಸರ್ಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ನಿಹಿತಗೊಂಡಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟ ಜಮೀನುಗಳ ಸರ್ವೆ ನಂಬರ್ ವಿವರಗಳು:–

ಕ್ರ ಸಂ	ಖಾತೆದಾರರ ಹೆಸರು	ಅನುಭವದಾರರ ಹೆಸರು	ಸರ್ವೆ ನಂ	ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟ ವಿಸ್ತೀರ್ಣ: ಐನ್ ಎ–ಗುಂ	ಖರಾಬು ಎ–ಗುಂ	ಉಳಿಕೆ ಎ–ಗುಂ
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ಗ್ರಾಮ: ಕೆ.ಜಿ.ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸಪುರ				ಹೋಬಳಿ: ಸೋಂಪುರ		
ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು: ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ				ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ:– ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ		
1	ಎಂ. ಶಾಂತಿಲಾಲ್, ಭೂ.ಪ, ಎಂ ಎನ್. ಚಂದ್ರಶೇಖರ್ ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ನಂಜಪ್ಪ	ಎಂ. ಶಾಂತಿಲಾಲ್, ಭೂ.ಪ, ಎಂ ಎನ್. ಚಂದ್ರಶೇಖರ್ ಬಿನ್ ಲೇಟ್ ನಂಜಪ್ಪ	7/2ರ ಪೈಕಿ	1–04.08	–	1–04.08
		ಒಟ್ಟು		**1–04.08**	–	**1–04.08**

–:: ಘೋಷ್ವಾರೆ ::–

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ.	ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಹೆಸರು	ವಿಸ್ತೀರ್ಣ: ಐನು ಎ–ಗು	ಖರಾಬು ಎ–ಗು	ಉಳಿಕೆ ಎ–ಗು
1	ಕೆ.ಜಿ.ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸಪುರ	1–04.08	–	1–04.08
	ಒಟ್ಟು	**1–04.08**	–	**1–04.08**

ಸಹಿ/– ವಿಶೇಷ ಭೂಸ್ವಾಧೀನಾಧಿಕಾರಿ–2, ಕೆಐಎಡಿಬಿ (ಬಿಎಂಐಸಿಪಿ) ಮತ್ತು ಬೆಂ.ಗ್ರಾಂ, ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು.

JEEViKA
Rural Development Department
Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society
State Rural Livelihoods Mission, Bihar
Govt. of Bihar
INVITATION FOR BIDS FOR SUPPLY OF TABLETS WITH ACCESSORIES AND MDM SOFTWARE.
(TWO ENVELOPE E-PROCUREMENT)
3rd Floor, Vidyut Bhawan-II, Bailey Road, Patna-800 021; Ph. +91-612-250 4980; Fax +91-612-250 4960, Website : www.brlps.in

Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (BRLPS), a Government of Bihar Society invite bids for Supply of Tablets with accessories and MDM Software. as per the following detail:

S.N.	Particulars	Date and time
1	Downloading of Bidding document	13/04/2026 through e- Procurement Portal https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in
2	Pre-Bid meeting (offline)	20/04/2026 at 03:00 PM at BRLPS office, Patna Bihar
3	Closing Date and Time for submission of Bid through https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in	12/05/2026 at 03:00 PM
4	Opening of Technical Bid through https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in	12/05/2026 at 03:30 PM
5	Opening of Financial Bid through https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in	Will be communicated to all technically qualified bidders through email.

For support related to e -tendering process, bidders may contact at the following address during working hours: 8AM to 7PM (All days in week except Sunday and few selected state holidays on "eProc 2.0 Help Desk Address: m-junction services limited RJ Complex, 2nd Floor, Canara Bank Campus, Khajpura, Ashiana Road, P.S. - Shastri Nagar, Patna 800 014, Bihar. Tollfree No: 1800 572 6571" or may contact on Email Id: eproc2support@bihar.gov.in

PR- 000440 (B & C) 2026-27

(Chief Executive Officer cum Mission Director)

For further details please visit : **www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar**

नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार

Chikkmagaluru Urban Development Authority
Hiremagaluru REsidential Layout, First Phase Hiremagaluru -Kadur Bypass Road, Kalyana Nagara, Chikkamagaluru-577102. www.chikmagalur.uda.gov.in
Tel: 08262-295712 Email: cmr_cudackm@yahoo.in
No.: CUDA:Sri.A.B.V.P.&H.R.L. C/I/C Site: e-Auction:Notice: 01:2026-27/15 Date: 04.04.2026

e-Auction Notice of Corner/Commercial Sites in Sri A.B. Vajpayee Residential Layout of Uppalli-Indavara Village adjacent to Hirekolale Road Developed by Chikkamagaluru Urban Development Authority.

Date of opening e-Auction for sites from Sl. No. 1 to 50: 05.04.2026 after 10.00 Hrs. (IST). Last date for expression of interest to participate in e-Auction: 21.04.2026 up to 17.30 Hrs. (IST).

Commencement date of live bidding in e-Auction for sites from Sl. No. 1 to 50: 22.04.2026 from 11.00 to 17.00 Hrs. (IST) (5.00 PM) (Delta Time of 5 Minutes will be given).

e-Auction Notice of Intermediary Sites in Hiremagaluru Residential Layout Developed by Chikkamagaluru Urban Development Authority.

Date of opening e-Auction for sites from Sl. No. 1 to 29: 05.04.2026 after 10.00 Hrs. (IST).Last date for expression of interest to participate in e-Auction:21.04.2026 upto 17.30 Hrs. (IST).

Commencement date of live bidding in e-Auction for sites from Sl.No. 1 to 29: 22.04.2026 from 11.00 to 17.00 Hrs. (IST) (5.00 PM) (Delta Time of 5 Minutes will be given).

E.M.D. to be paid for participating in e-Auction, Rs.50,000/- for each site and Minimum increase in Bid Price for sites Rs. 10,000/-.

For participation in e-Auction, further information, details of sites, visit website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Commissioner, Chikkamagaluru Urban Development Authority, Chikkamagaluru.
DIPR/ckm/ksmca/26-27/06/53

A respite

The U.S. should not allow Israel to sabotage the ceasefire with Iran

After demanding Iran's unconditional surrender and threatening to erase its civilisation, U.S. President Donald Trump, on April 8, agreed to a two-week ceasefire and to hold direct talks with Tehran on the basis of its 10-point peace formula. Iran has said that it will honour the truce and allow the "safe passage" of vessels through the Strait of Hormuz. This war need not have been launched in the first place. The U.S. and Iran had held multiple rounds of talks and Omani and British officials said that a deal was within reach. But Mr. Trump, aided and abetted by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, ordered the bombing of Iran on February 28, killing its Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and several others. Mr. Trump gravely miscalculated Iran's response; it regionalised the conflict by attacking U.S. bases across the Gulf and dragged the global economy into it by taking control of the Strait. True, the U.S. and Israel pulverised Iran over the past 40 days. Yet, the U.S. did not have an easy option to reopen the Strait. Remarkably, Mr. Trump's central demand to end the war was for Iran to reopen the Strait that was open before he launched the war.

On day 1 of the war, Mr. Trump set several sweeping objectives, including destroying Iran's missile capabilities, its navy, nuclear programme and pursuing regime change. None has been met. The war has pushed up oil, gas and food prices, aggravating economic woes worldwide. In Iran's latest 10-point proposal, Tehran has reaffirmed its control over the Strait of Hormuz, demanded a removal of all sanctions and guarantees against future aggression. Far from weakening Iran, the U.S.-Israel war has left it strategically stronger in an increasingly fragile region. If Mr. Trump has realised, even belatedly, the scale of his misjudgement, it is good news for West Asia. Pakistan deserves credit for its constructive diplomatic efforts that helped bring the two sides closer. But the ceasefire is only a beginning. Wide gaps remain between the U.S.'s 15-point proposal and Iran's 10-point formula. Iran and Pakistan say the truce applies on all fronts, including Lebanon. Mr. Netanyahu, while welcoming the ceasefire, has ruled out any halt to Israeli attacks in Lebanon. For peace and stability in the region, Israel and its militarism must be reined in. Finally, Mr. Trump must realise that his incendiary rhetoric, his vulgarism and genocidal threats are not just a disgrace to the office he holds but also counterproductive in international diplomacy. He should watch his words and focus on securing a durable peace if he wants to escape the mess he has put himself in.

At long last

India must now revamp its nuclear regulatory regime

The Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) in Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu, achieving first criticality is a genuine cause for satisfaction, albeit a measured one. A Parliamentary Standing Committee reported this year that the project's final cost is ₹8,181 crore, more than twice the sanctioned amount. Criticality itself is at least 16 years behind schedule; the fast reactor fuel cycle facility is expected to be commissioned by 2029, over a decade late. Poor planning and flawed procurement, abetted by political insulation, are the causes of the delay. The PFBR is the first commercial-scale component of the second stage of India's nuclear power programme. Its purpose is to use spent fuel, after reprocessing, from the first stage, and depleted uranium to produce more plutonium. In the final stage, reactors will use plutonium and thorium as fuel. The programme's design is based on India's abundant thorium deposits, but this sword cuts both ways. The nuclear establishment must also be scrupulous about the PFBR's performance as it is prepared for commercial operation, and admit mistakes or under-performance plainly. The goal is not to use thorium at any cost but to achieve energy security and self-sufficiency. If the economics of solar and wind power render the current nuclear power paradigm a poor allocation of scarce public capital, that finding should honestly determine policy.

Nuclear power contributes around 3% of India's electricity from 8.78 GW of installed capacity. The country has committed to becoming a net-zero economy by 2070 amid an energy demand growth that will be among the largest of any major economy over the next two decades. Nuclear power facilities are expected to consume 6% of the land area required for equivalent solar power generation per unit of electricity produced. Considering that India's biodiversity commitments depend on not converting green cover, nuclear power offers a non-trivial path forward. Breeder reactors are more fuel-efficient, and will also extend the fuel cycle and reduce dependence on uranium imports. The challenge is to realise these merits without squandering time and public money. This means fixing the problems that the PFBR throws up during commissioning, and proceeding with the planned FBR1 and FBR2 units at Kalpakkam based on lessons learned, without the opacity that has prevailed so far. The PFBR also comes online alongside the SHANTI Act, private nuclear power operations, the advent of small modular reactors, and a new liability regime. Now is an opportune time for India to revamp its regulatory regime. So far, the AERB and the DAE have reported to the Atomic Energy Commission, which is thus both the promoter and the regulator of nuclear energy. The government must resolve this administrative short-circuit before any new complexities arise.

The other side of sport — mastering manufacturing

Sanjeet Singh
Senior Adviser at NITI Aayog

Lakshita Mehrotra
Senior Team Lead at the Foundation for Economic Development (FED)

To say that sports is an emotion in India is an understatement. Although cricket takes up most of the mindshare, the sports ecosystem in India is evolving rapidly with athletes such as Neeraj Chopra and Lakshya Sen bringing attention to the diversity in sports in the right manner. But besides viewership and athletes, the sports ecosystem comprises several key players that keep the growth engine running. One such important, but rather overlooked, component is that of sports goods manufacturing.

Sports equipment manufacturing, a highly labour-intensive sector, plays a significant role in the economics of sport. NITI Aayog and the Foundation for Economic Development (FED) have recently released a report on 'Realising the export potential of the sports equipment manufacturing market in India' that details the state of affairs. Culturally, India interacts heavily with sports, but the country contributes only about 0.5% to the nearly $50 billion global trade in sports equipment. This under-representation is not due to the absence of legacy or capability. Rather, it points to structural issues in the industry that have significantly hampered its ability to reach its full potential.

Diverse manufacturing landscape

India's manufacturing footprint in sports equipment is geographically concentrated and operationally fragmented. Production still primarily hinges on old, well-established centres such as Jalandhar (Punjab) and Meerut (Uttar Pradesh), which together hold more than an 80% share of domestic output. The sports equipment industry in India is small in terms of production volume and is largely dominated by micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) engaged in labour-intensive segments such as stitched balls, cricket gear, protective accessories and entry-level fitness equipment. If, on the one hand, this artisanal skill level has sustained the industry for a long time, on the other hand, it has restricted scaling, the adoption of new technologies, and the emergence of internationally recognised brands.

One key characteristic of the sector is the high level of diversity in sports equipment manufacturing compared to other sectors. Raw materials, machinery and the techniques of making footballs, for example, are entirely different from the ones required for making hockey sticks or golf shafts. This vast range of differences makes effective policy design exceedingly difficult and often leads to generic interventions that overlook category-specific realities.

To understand the right ways to compete at a global level, we first need to find out what makes local manufacturers inherently less cost-effective.

> Critical structural problems are preventing India's sports equipment industry from reaching its full potential

As per the report, industry data show that Indian firms encounter on average a 15% cost disadvantage when compared to their peers in China and Pakistan. For example, a football produced in India might cost ₹100, while competing countries might be able to produce it for only ₹85-₹87. This gap, which is a result of factors such as higher input prices, inefficient logistical planning, and limited economies of scale, greatly reduces export competitiveness and impacts the pricing power that companies have.

The core issues

Making high-performance sports equipment requires feature-specific items such as specialised polymers, performance fabrics, carbon composites and precision tooling. The issue is that not all of these are produced domestically, and those that are made locally are manufactured on an extremely limited scale. Moreover, import duties on such components, as well as on advanced manufacturing machinery, drive up production costs. For MSMEs which function with extremely low margins, these additional levies essentially hinder the possibility of investing not only in technology upgrades but also in product diversification.

Issues related to ease of doing business aggravate the problem. Manufacturing is mainly concentrated in the northern parts of India, which leads to extremely high logistics costs when exporting goods through distant ports. On top of that, rising land prices, fragmented industrial infrastructure, and industrial delays on account of compliance are some of the other factors that keep on eroding operational efficiency. As these challenges are structural rather than cyclical, smaller firms with weak financial strength are most affected.

Another problem is certification and standards compliance. Globally traded sports equipment must meet the very stringent performance standards laid down by international federations. India lacks certified production facilities that meet international standards for most sports categories; therefore, manufacturers must have their products validated by European labs.

Testing expenses can range from ₹5 lakh to ₹50 lakh per stock keeping unit (SKU) which is an enormous amount for an MSME. Apart from the direct monetary costs, a prolonged certification process also delays market launches, which in turn discourages experimentation and, consequently, impedes innovation.

There are many reasons why the sports sector in India is not expanding rapidly, one of which is demand side problems. India has, by and large, failed to create sports brands with worldwide appeal, similar to those for cricket equipment, that could command premium pricing. The main reasons for the lack of organic global demand for Indian sports equipment are low marketing investments, few international brand partnerships, and the absence of long-term, athlete-brand relationship-driven demand. Hence, most domestic firms today focus on contract manufacturing at the lowest-value end of the spectrum, whereas they should be aiming for original brand ownership.

Reform, support, upgrade

Addressing these issues is complex and requires a balanced approach. The report outlines a clear pathway with key recommendations. First, rationalise import duties on specialised raw materials and advanced machinery to regain price competitiveness. Second, provide targeted fiscal support, such as export-linked incentives, offsetting certification costs, and aiding participation in international trade platforms. Third, India should leverage its advantage in industries such as technical textiles, footwear production, plastics processing, and light engineering alongside sports goods clusters to enable rapid technological upgrades, increase production scale, and shift toward higher-value, performance-oriented equipment.

In the medium term, India must also establish internationally recognised testing and certification centres, which reduce compliance costs, facilitate quicker time-to-market for new innovations, and showcase India's intent to be a standards-setting player rather than just a supplier.

Finally, by investing in local raw materials, especially advanced composites and performance fabrics, India can gradually reduce imports and improve supply availability. On the demand side, relying solely on contract manufacturing is insufficient; building strong domestic brands is essential. A unified national campaign involving top athletes, sports federations, industry bodies, and government departments can help showcase Indian sports equipment globally.

Utilising strategic procurement methods linked with India's forthcoming international sporting events can generate a short-term demand uplift while also promoting domestic production to global buyers.

For long, India has supplied sports goods mainly through indirect global value chains. The next decade offers a chance to change this. With growing domestic sports activity, a reshaping of global supply chains, and opportunities from hosting major international events, the ingredients for change exist. What is lacking is a strategic, well-executed plan to shift from scattered traditional production to large-scale, advanced manufacturing. If India seizes this opportunity, it could become a key player in the global sports economy and set new trends in how sports are played worldwide.

Jan Vishwas 2.0 is all about trust-based compliance

Chandrajit Banerjee
Director General, The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)

The passage of the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026 by Parliament reflects a conscious and forward-looking policy choice by the Government of India to recalibrate the balance between enforcement and facilitation, and to embed trust as a central pillar of the regulatory framework. The reform signals a clear departure from over-reliance on criminal sanctions toward a more proportionate, predictable, and facilitative approach to compliance.

In recent years, the decriminalisation of minor business-related offences has emerged as a core element of India's reform agenda. The underlying objective has been consistent: to rationalise compliance requirements, enhance ease of doing business and foster a regulatory culture that promotes voluntary compliance rather than fear-driven adherence. Excessive criminalisation of technical and procedural lapses had created compliance anxiety, discouraged entrepreneurship, and diverted administrative and judicial resources from more serious violations.

A journey of reform

This reform journey began with the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2023, which decriminalised minor offences by amending 183 provisions across 42 Central Acts administered by 19 Ministries and Departments. By replacing criminal penalties for technical and procedural non-compliances with civil penalties or administrative measures, it significantly reduced the compliance burden on businesses and citizens, improving both ease of doing business and ease of living.

Building on this foundation, the 2026 Bill, commonly referred to as the Jan Vishwas 2.0, represents a decisive scale-up of this reform effort. The Bill proposes amendments to 784 provisions across 79 Central Acts administered by 23 Ministries and Departments, including the decriminalisation of 717 provisions. It also rationalises the statute book by removing obsolete and redundant offences, thereby strengthening the coherence and credibility of India's overall regulatory architecture.

> Driven by clarity and proportionality, Jan Vishwas 2.0 will help shift Indian businesses toward a trust-based compliance culture

Extensive engagement between government, industry bodies, experts and other stakeholders has helped identify provisions where criminal liability was disproportionate to the nature of the offence. Such sustained dialogue has been critical in ensuring that regulatory objectives are preserved even as enforcement mechanisms are made more facilitative. Going forward, continued consultation will remain essential to keep regulation aligned with evolving economic realities.

A process of engagement

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has shaped this reform agenda through sustained, evidence-based policymaker engagement. Industry representations consistently highlighted a large number of statutory offences related to minor and procedural lapses – delays in filings, documentation gaps or clerical errors – that did not warrant criminal prosecution. The CII has emphasised that decriminalisation of such offences strengthens compliance rather than diluting enforcement.

The CII's advocacy has gone beyond decriminalisation alone. A persistent industry recommendation has been to move away from court-imposed 'fines' toward a system of regulatory 'penalties' administered by executive authorities, with clear rules, proportionality, and time-bound resolution. The CII has also stressed the need for the retrospective application of decriminalisation reforms, covering cases currently pending in criminal courts. The Jan Vishwas 2.0 seems to address these long-standing concerns very well.

At a broader level, the Jan Vishwas 2.0 reflects a fundamental shift in regulatory philosophy, from criminalisation to trust, proportionality and economic efficiency. It recognises that most technical or procedural violations occur without *mala fide* intent and are better resolved through civil or administrative mechanisms. The reform explicitly retains stringent enforcement for serious offences where public interest, safety, environmental protection or national priorities are involved. The amendments span key sectors such as exports, textiles, the environment, and transport, and introduce graded enforcement mechanisms, including warnings and lower penalties for first-time or minor violations. Such measures should reduce regulatory uncertainty and boost confidence, especially for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) facing high compliance burdens.

Reduces 'court congestion'

These reforms could significantly help India's overburdened judiciary. With nearly 50 million cases pending in courts – many for minor procedural or technical violations – shifting such matters out of criminal courts can reduce congestion and improve efficiency. Government indications, post the passing of the Bill in Parliament, suggest many pending minor cases may be reviewed for closure under the revised framework.

The Bill also advances trust-based regulation by introducing tools such as improvement notices and proportionate penalties for first-time contraventions. This approach recognises the reality that most businesses and citizens act in good faith and comply more effectively in a regulatory environment that is clear, predictable and fair.

The success of the Jan Vishwas 2.0 will depend on effective implementation. Strengthening institutional capacity for administrative adjudication, ensuring uniform enforcement practices, and issuing clear guidance to regulated entities will be critical to realising the full benefits of the reform for industry and citizens.

By decisively moving towards a trust-based, proportionate and growth-oriented framework, The Jan Vishwas 2.0 has the potential to create a more predictable, transparent and investor-friendly environment. Ultimately, the reform reinforces a simple yet powerful principle: compliance works best when driven by clarity, proportionality, and – above all – trust.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Ceasefire announcement

The decision by the United States and Iran to observe a conditional ceasefire will bring immense relief to the global community, which has been facing a severe energy crisis. This assumes greater significance in the backdrop of an ominous threat issued by the U.S. President that 'a whole civilization will die tonight'. However, Israel's claim that the ceasefire does not include Lebanon sustains fears that the war may continue during this crucial two-week window. It is Mr. Trump's responsibility to prevail upon Israel to halt attacks on Lebanon for meaningful negotiations to take place.

Kosaraju Chandramouli,
Hyderabad

Police brutality

One recalls with deep shock and sorrow the Sathankulam custodial death case. Sadly, such incidents are not uncommon. When the incident occurred, we pointed out the pitfalls of passing mechanical remand orders (Letters to the Editor, June 29, 2020). Safeguards were suggested. One hopes that the government acts on those recommendations, as the worst sufferers, as always, are the poor. Unless all safeguards, as previously noted, are implemented, constitutional guarantees will remain only on paper.

N.G.R. Prasad,
K.K. Ram Siddhartha,
Chennai

Corrections & Clarifications

The results of the Kerala Assembly elections are to be declared on May 4, 2026, and not May 3 (Opinion page – Data Point, "Amid welfare pitch, Kerala ranks highest in most indicators", April 8).

Telephone: +91-44-28576347/28576300; E-mail:readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

The thermal cost of India's textile surge

Sreoshi Banerjee
Postdoctoral researcher at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

Raktimava Bose
Consultant at the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)

India is currently winning the global trade shuffle. As political instability rocks traditional hubs such as Bangladesh, international buyers are pivoting toward Indian textile clusters. But as factories in Tiruppur and Bengaluru take on these surge orders, they are walking into a thermodynamic crisis they haven't budgeted for.

The crisis is personal before it is industrial. A textile worker in Tamil Nadu loses 50% of her work capacity on a 40°C afternoon; and as she does not have any sick leaves or cooling breaks, she also loses 50% of her day's wages. She absorbs the cost of a warming planet so that global supply chains remain 'efficient.' However, the biology of labour is hitting a wall, and India's textile industry is quietly cracking under the weight.

The crisis of productivity

Between 2001 and 2020, India lost an estimated 259 billion labour hours annually due to heat stress, a productivity haemorrhage exceeding $600 billion each year. In 2024 alone, that loss spiked to as high as 247 billion hours.

The productivity crisis is no longer a theoretical risk; it is a mechanical and biological reality crippling India's industrial heartlands. In the manufacturing hubs of Palghar, Maharashtra, factory owners report production capacity dropping by up to 50% as extreme heat triggers hazardous conditions that jeopardise both man and machine. Intense temperatures often restrict operations to just four hours daily, as heat becomes unbearable for the workforce. It also increases the likelihood of workplace injuries and serious health conditions, including heatstroke and dehydration. Industrial equipment, designed for more temperate baselines, frequently overheat, leading to sudden operational shutdowns and technical failures that derail tight production schedules. This physical collapse of the shop floor is mirrored in Karnataka's textile factories, where, indoor temperatures routinely exceed 35-40°C, far above the permitted threshold of 30°C. At these extremes, the "human engine" throttles down as a matter of survival. International studies confirm that at 33-34°C, a worker's capacity is effectively halved.

As per research published in the *Journal of Political Economy* in 2021, annual output falls by 2% per degree Celsius. On individual hot days, the decline reaches 4%. For India's textile industry, which employs 45 million people and controls 39% of global cotton cultivation, this crisis has led to operational collapse.

The productivity crisis is no longer a theoretical risk; it is a mechanical and biological reality crippling India's industrial heartlands

The supply chain trap

Global brands impose strict delivery deadlines and heavy financial penalties for delays. Yet, workers cannot be pushed beyond physiological limits. Thus, factory managers face an impossible choice: ignore worker collapse to meet a shipment, or face financial ruin. As orders shift to India due to regional and political instability, hubs such as Tiruppur are being crushed by a "thermodynamic bottleneck" where surge orders collide with record-breaking heat. This creates a regressive tax on the poor, disguised as a weather problem. While global brands insulate themselves by diversifying sourcing – shifting orders to Vietnam or Mexico – local factory owners lack the bargaining power to renegotiate terms and the burden is pushed downward. Ultimately, the cost is absorbed by the millions of informal workers who have no safety net; when a factory floor becomes a furnace, they don't just lose productivity, they lose their daily wages. History has shown that when disruption strikes, workers pay the price; for example, during COVID-19, brands cancelled $2.8 billion worth of orders from Bangladesh in March 2020 alone, affecting approximately 1.2 million workers.

By 2030, India is projected to lose 5.8% of its daily working hours to extreme heat, the equivalent of 34 million full-time jobs. The supply chain will not break gradually; it will break when orders simply cannot be met because the human element has reached its thermal limit.

The way forward

India has a choice. It can either continue to externalise the cost of a warming planet onto workers, or the country can systematically transit to a climate-smart supply chain. This requires action on five fronts: first, policymakers must recognise heat stress as a supply chain risk and integrate climate-heat projections into industrial policy and trade agreements. Second, industrial clusters must adopt mandatory heat-action plans with enforceable temperature thresholds, cooling breaks, and worker health assessments. Third, financing mechanisms must be reformed. Banks must incorporate climate risk into loan assessments, and governments must offer concessional credit lines supporting investments in cooling systems, water management, and heat-resilient technologies. Fourth, labour protection codes must be strengthened to address heat stress explicitly. Workers must have guaranteed access to clean drinking water, and shaded rest areas. Fifth, innovation must be driven through targeted R&D grants for wearable cooling technologies, heat-tolerant cotton varieties, and energy-efficient manufacturing processes. And finally, international buyers must bear part of the adaptation cost, through fairer pricing and longer lead times. For decades, the global fashion industry has operated on a convenient lie: that the 'cost of production' is a static number on a spreadsheet. This number was artificially deflated by a climate we took for granted. The physics of thermoregulation will not bend to profit margins. If heat stress remains invisible in boardrooms, India's workers will pay in lost wages and shortened lives.

Views expressed are personal.

National polity yet regional sentiment

The BJP should be careful not to fall foul of regional pride in Odisha

STATE OF PLAY

Nistula Hebbar
nistula.hebbar@thehindu.co.in

The observance of *Utkal Dibas* or Odisha Day last week, normally a matter of course, became a subject of intense scrutiny this time, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's letter to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi put through the sieve of political meaning for any references to the State's former Chief Minister and socialist leader Biju Patnaik.

In his letter, the PM praised the late leader, stating that, "This is the soil that nurtured the great Biju Patnaik, whose life epitomises strength, courage and an unwavering commitment to nation-building. Biju Babu's multifaceted persona inspires us all."

Again, these words shouldn't have garnered any scrutiny. Biju Patnaik, who was close to Jawaharlal Nehru, was after all, a former Royal Air Force pilot; rescuer of Indonesian freedom fighters Sultan Sjahrir and Achmad Sukarno who were defying a Dutch blockade in 1947; socialist leader; former Chief Minister of Odisha; and father of Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader Naveen Patnaik. The BJD, now prime rivals to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Odisha, had been allies of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the Vajpayee years and later held strict neutrality on many political issues, rescuing the NDA government over tricky legislations in Parliament as part of a political quid pro quo.

The controversy

However, encomiums for Biju Patnaik by the PM came after a BJP MP, Nishikant Dubey,

made a statement alluding that Biju Patnaik was reportedly under the influence of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the U.S. (the reference to Patnaik was couched within a criticism of former PM Jawaharlal Nehru). Reactions in Odisha were swift and cut across party lines. The normally staid Naveen Patnaik stated that Mr. Dubey needed help with his mental health; BJD members of the parliamentary standing committee on Information Technology headed by Mr. Dubey quit in protest; and other BJP MPs from Odisha gave out statements disagreeing with Mr. Dubey's comments.

This across-the-line protest on statements that impugned the reputation of Biju Patnaik reveals the stresses of being a national party falling foul of regional sentiments. Mr. Dubey was on safe ground when he was taking to task a national party like the Congress, but when it came to a regional party such as the BJD, with its strong identification with the sentiments of regional pride of their particular States, Mr. Dubey found himself isolated within his own party.

For the BJP, in power for the first time on its own in the State, it was a lesson on how the issue of regional pride can bite when it swings both ways.

During the 2024 Lok Sabha and Assembly polls it was the BJP that invoked Odia pride when the BJD had bureaucrat V.K.Pandian, a Tamilian and a close aide of Mr. Naveen Patnaik, taking a prominent role in the party's campaign. Odisha was the first Indian State created on a linguistic basis, in 1936, after a long struggle which emphasised its linguistic and regional pride. Fielding Mr. Pandian as the face of the BJD's electoral campaign saw the BJP accuse the regional party of transgressing *Odia Asmita* or Odia pride.

The BJD paid the price for this electoral misadventure, losing power after 24 years. Several BJD MPs and leaders had over the years made their way to the BJP as well.

Double-edged sword

Now, the regional pride issue has swung the other way, with the BJD accusing the BJP of being party to an insult to one of the most prominent icons of the State.

The BJP on its part was quick to get all its MPs and leaders to condemn their party colleague, Mr. Dubey, on his statement, with the latter then offering an unconditional apology for his remarks and walking back from the allegations that he had levelled against Biju Patnaik.

The issue of regional and cultural pride is tricky, especially for non-regional parties that are hunting for political space. For the BJP, Mr. Dubey's statements were at first yet another attack on the Congress, but the consequences of it were felt in Odisha. For the BJD, it was an opportunity for the party to assert before the Odia people, that while national parties may speak the language of regional pride, their national spread can trip them up on issues of sentiment.

The endurance of the tall shadow of Biju Patnaik over Odisha politics shows that regional sentiments are never far from the surface.

Poll-bound Assam trails in health and education indicators

Low basic vaccination, high maternal mortality, and increasing dropout rates at the higher education level are some of the challenges the State faces

DATA POINT

Devyanshi Bihani

With Assam set to vote on April 9, for its 126-member Assembly, in a contest between the incumbent Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress, an indicators-based analysis reveals that the State lags behind others in India in key areas such as health, education, and human development.

Assam's Human Development Index (HDI) stood at 0.699 in 2023, below the national average of 0.732, placing it 24th among 29 States. The gap with top-performing States remains wide, with Goa and Kerala recording HDI values above 0.86. Economic indicators show a similar trend. The State ranked 18th in per capita net domestic product, with an average of ₹1.59 lakh, significantly lower than the national average of ₹2.05 lakh. However, with an average daily wage of ₹384, the State's average rural wage level is closer to the national average of ₹398 **(Table 1)**.

Health indicators largely present a concerning picture **(Table 2)**. The infant mortality rate stands at 31.9, lower than the national average of 35.2. The proportion of stunted children stands at 35%, only marginally lower than the national average. While only a smaller share of households rely on 'unimproved' sanitation facilities compared to the national average, Assam is placed among the worst-performing States in this indicator.

Immunisation and maternal health indicators point to deeper structural challenges. Only 67% of children receive all basic vaccinations, which is significantly below the national average of 77%, placing Assam among the lowest-ranked States. Maternal mortality remains particularly high, at 195 per one lakh live births, which is nearly double the national average, making Assam one of the worst-performing States on this indicator. At the same time, some indicators show relatively better outcomes. The share of women aged 15-19 who have begun childbearing is 4.1%, lower than the national average of 6.8%, suggesting some progress in delaying early pregnancies. Health insurance coverage is also relatively high, with nearly two-thirds of households having at least one member covered under a scheme.

Education indicators reveal a contrast between access and outcomes **(Table 3)**. Assam records a perfect adjusted net enrolment rate of 100% at the elementary level, indicating near-universal access to schooling. However, the dropout rate stands at 20.3%, placing the State among the worst performers. Enrolment at the higher level is particularly weak; the gross enrolment ratio in higher secondary education is just about 40%. However, gender parity in higher education is relatively balanced, with Assam holding the 9th rank in this indicator. Women related indicators also reflect a mixed picture. The share of women (18.6%) with no schooling is lower than the national average. The State also has a higher share of males (12.5%) with no education. The use of hygienic menstrual products is significantly below the national average, placing Assam among the poorer-performing States on this indicator.

Infrastructure and environmental indicators further highlight uneven development **(Table 4)**. Per capita fossil fuel consumption is relatively low compared to the national average, though this likely reflects lower per capita energy use rather than greater efficiency. Rural internet penetration remains limited, placing Assam among the poorer performing States on this measure.

Assam's profile shows strengths in wage levels, and health coverage but it continues to lag behind in areas such as maternal health, and human development.

With inputs from Nitika Francis and Sambavi Parthasarathy

State scorecard

The data for the tables were sourced from the National Family Health Survey (2021-22), NITI Ayog SDG India Index (2023-24), Global Data Lab, Economic Survey 2024-25 and Parliament question/answers

Table 1: Assam's values and ranks in terms of Human Development and economic indicators

Indicator	Assam's value	Assam's rank (out of 29)	India average	Top States/UTs
Human Development Index (2023)	0.699	24 out of 29	0.732	Goa (0.862), Kerala (0.86), Delhi (0.837)
Per capita net domestic product (₹)	1,59,185	18 out of 23	2,05,324	Delhi (4,93,024), Telangana (3,87,623)
Average daily wage rates in rural areas (₹)	384.8	9 out of 18	398	Kerala (868.7), T.N. (573.2), H.P. (516)

Table 2: Assam's values and ranks across various health-related indicators

Indicator	Assam's value	Assam's rank	India average	Top States/UTs
The share of women aged 15-19 who have begun childbearing (%)	4.1	12 out of 29	6.8	Uttarakhand (2.4%), Kerala (2.4%), Goa (2.7%)
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000)	31.9	19 out of 29	35.2	Kerala (4.4), Goa (5.6), Sikkim (11.2)
The share of population with 'unimproved' sanitation facilities (%)	12	26 out of 29	19.3	Mizoram (0.1%), Kerala (0.2%), Sikkim (0.3%)
The share of children aged 0-5 years whose growth is stunted (%)	35	20 out of 29	36	Sikkim (22%), Kerala (23%), Manipur (23%)
Percentage of children with all basic vaccinations (%)	67	26 out of 29	77	Odisha (91%), Tamil Nadu (89%), Himachal (89%)
Women using a hygienic method of menstrual protection (%)	67	25 out of 29	77.6	Tamil Nadu (98.4%), Delhi (97.1%), Goa (96.8%)
Maternal mortality ratio (per 1,00,000 live births)	195	19 out of 19	97	Kerala (19), Maharashtra (33), Telangana (43)
Households with at least one member covered by a health scheme (%)	66.7	7 out of 29	41	Rajasthan (87.8%), Andhra Pradesh (80.2%), Goa (73.1%)

Table 3: Assam's values and ranks across various education-related indicators

Indicator	Assam's value	Assam's rank (out of 29)	India average	Top States/UTs
The share of women (aged 15-49) who have no schooling (%)	18.6	17	22.6	Kerala (0.8%), Mizoram (5.3%), Goa (5.5%)
The share of men (aged 15-49) who have no schooling (%)	12.5	21	10.7	Kerala (2.3%), Goa (3.2%), Mizoram (3.4%)
The average annual dropout rate at the secondary level (classes 9-10)	20.3	26	12.6	Manipur (1.3), H.P. (1.5), T.N. (4.5)
Adjusted Net Enrolment Rate (ANER) in elementary education (%)	100	1	96.5	Multiple States (100%)
Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher secondary (%)	40.1	27	57.6	Delhi (94.9%), H.P. (94.1%), Kerala (85%)
Gender Parity Index (GPI) for higher education	1.09	9	1.01	Kerala (1.44), H.P. (1.33), Nagaland (1.28)

Table 4: Assam's values and ranks across various environmental and infrastructure-related indicators

Indicator	Assam's value	Assam's rank	India average	Top States/UTs
Plastic waste generated per 1,000 population (Tonnes/annum)	1.68	13 out of 23	3.04	Goa (18.9), Delhi (16.9), Telangana (12.5)
Per capita fossil fuel consumption (in kg)	88.42	19 out of 21	166.43	Haryana (341.9), Gujarat (339.2), H.P. (271.7)
Percentage of urban households living in kachha houses (%)	0.8%	13 out of 29	0.9%	Kerala (0%), Haryana (0.2%), Maharashtra (0.2%)
Internet subscribers per 100 population in rural areas	33.66	23 out of 28	38.33	Goa (174.98), Kerala (160.19), Sikkim (104.35)

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 9, 1976

Massive pro-Hua rally in Peking

Peking, April 8: The fall of a new "renegade" for "counter revolutionary" activities and the appointment of a successor to the later Premier Chou En-lai gave rise in Peking to-day to the biggest mass demonstration seen in China since the Cultural Revolution of the late Sixties.

Several hundred thousand people, may be a million, took part in the huge assembly, superbly orchestrated by the Chinese communist party to dump Ten Hsiaoping in the 'rubbish bin of history'.

Tens of thousands poured onto the main avenue of Eternal Tranquillity, beating drums and cymbals and carrying banners pledging support for Mr. Hua Kuo-feng and opposition to Mr. Teng.

Cheer leaders with loudhailers directed the massive congregation of school children, students and workers, which swarmed through the heart of the capital.

Groups carried portraits of Chairman Mao and banners declaring: "We warmly support the two resolution of the Central Committee".

In the official version of the riots here on Monday, the New China News Agency said more than 100 guards and militiamen were injured, some seriously during the riots.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 9, 1926

Preventing soil erosion

Extensive experiments have been carried about in Ceylon estates with a view of solving the problem of the denudation of the soil, particularly in hilly districts, says a correspondent in "The Statesman" writing from Colombo. Tea estates in India will no doubt, take the greatest interest in whatever methods are suggested to prevent soil erosion whether the suggestion comes from Agricultural Departments or from individual research workers.

Many planters in Ceylon believe that the problem is now particularly solved by the system of 'contour platforms' which has been evolved by a well-known Sinhalese planter Mr. C.E.A Dias. This gentleman got the idea from Italy, where the vineyards on steep hillsides are planted according to the contour of the land and he improved this system further so as to prevent any erosion of the surface soil whatever.

From Page One

Fragile U.S.-Iran ceasefire kicks in

"We received a 10-point proposal from Iran, and believe it is a workable basis on which to negotiate. Almost all of the various points of past contention have been agreed to between the United States and Iran, but a two week period will allow the Agreement to be finalised and consummated," Mr. Trump added.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the U.S. requested for talks based on its 15-point proposals and President Trump has accepted "the entirety of Iran's 10-point proposals as a basis for negotiations". "If the attacks on the Islamic Republic of Iran cease, our powerful armed forces will also cease their defensive attacks. Safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be possible for two weeks in coordination with the Iranian armed forces and taking into account existing technical limitations," Mr. Araghchi said in a statement.

Iran's Supreme National Security Council said the country has dealt a "historic and crushing defeat" to the U.S. and Israel, adding that Washington was forced to accept its 10-point proposal. The 10-point proposal, according to the Council, includes: no new aggression against Iran; continued Iranian control over the Strait of Hormuz; acceptance of uranium enrichment; removal of all sanctions; payment of compensation; withdrawal of U.S. combat forces from the region and cessation of war on all fronts, including Lebanon.

Later in the day, the White House said the 10-point proposal Iran has submitted to the U.S. was different from the plan released by Iran's state media. Mr. Trump also said in an interview that Lebanon was not part of the ceasefire and wrote in a social media post that Iran would not be enriching uranium, both contradicting Iran's public positions.

"There will be no enrichment of Uranium, and the United States will, working with Iran, dig up and remove all of the deeply buried (B-2 Bombers) Nuclear "Dust," he said. He also said talks are under way on "tariff and sanctions" relief for Iran.

After the U.S. leader announced the deal, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif invited both sides to Islamabad for direct talks on April 10.

"I... extend deepest gratitude to the leadership of both the countries and invite their delegations to Islamabad on Friday to further negotiate for a conclusive agreement... We earnestly hope, that the 'Islamabad Talks' succeed in achieving sustainable peace and wish to share more good news in coming days!" he wrote in a social media post.

Meeting between EC and Trinamool ends on acrimonious note

Trinamool Cong. delegation says CEC asked them to 'get lost'; sources say Commission told Derek O'Brien, MP, not to shout and 'maintain decorum'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A meeting between the Trinamool Congress and the full bench of the Election Commission of India ended on an acrimonious note on Wednesday with each side accusing the other of inappropriate behaviour.

While the Trinamool delegation, comprising its Rajya Sabha leader Derek O'Brien, deputy leader Sagarika Ghose, and Saket Gokhale and Menaka Guruswamy, MPs, alleged that Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar asked them to "get lost", poll body sources said the Commission had asked Mr. O'Brien not to raise his voice.

"Derek O'Brien shouted at the Election Commission and asked CEC not to speak. The CEC requested Mr. Derek O'Brien to maintain decorum of the Commission room. Shouting and indecent behaviour is not appropriate," the source said.

The Commission later posted on X that its "straight-talk to Trinamool Congress" was that "this time, the elections in West Bengal would surely be: fear-free, violence-free, intimidation-free, inducement-free and without any *chappa* [rigging], booth jamming and source jamming."

Gyanesh Kumar with Election Commissioners S.S. Sandhu and Vivek Joshi at the meeting with a Trinamool delegation on Wednesday. PTI

The Trinamool delegation met the Commission a day after it emerged that 90 lakh voters have been deleted from the electoral roll in West Bengal following the adjudication process of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

Mr. O'Brien told the media that the delegation handed over nine letters written by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to the CEC, which have not been acknowledged.

"We asked the CEC how he can ensure the conduct of free and fair elections when such tainted officers are being appointed in Bengal. To this, his answer was 'get lost'. We told the CEC we would not listen to him because he does not allow his colleagues to speak. We have attended eight or nine meetings like this, where none other than the CEC speaks," he said.

Mr. O'Brien said that one of the Trinamool leaders present 'congratulated' Mr. Kumar on being the first CEC in history to have notices seeking his removal submitted in Parliament.

Many Trinamool leaders took to X to reject the poll body's claims of inappropriate behaviour by the delegation.

Ms. Ghose called the poll panel's claim a "blatant lie", and said "none of this was said to the four-member delegation".

"Two lines were said to us by the Chief Election Commissioner 'Vanish' Kumar. The first line: where is your authorised signatory. And the second most shameful two words: 'get lost'," Ms. Ghose said.

Cabinet clears draft amendment Bill over women's reservation

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a draft amendment Bill to implement the Women's Reservation Act by the 2029 Lok Sabha elections.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, sources said. The amendment seeks to revise the implementation framework of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, formally known as the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, passed in 2023. Under the proposal, the strength of the Lok Sabha is set to rise from 543 to 816, following a fresh delimitation exercise.

Of the expanded House, 273 seats, around one-third will be reserved for women. The quota will be applied vertically, providing reservation for women within the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe categories as well.

In a significant departure from the existing law, the government plans to carry out delimitation based on the 2011 Census, rather than waiting for Census data from 2027.

The Bill will be taken up for debate at the Budget Session from April 16-18.

India to engage new govt. of Bangladesh constructively: MEA

Kallol Bhattacherjee
Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

India will engage constructively with the 'new government' of Bangladesh and the two sides will 'deepen' bilateral ties, said the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Wednesday after External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar hosted Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's Foreign Affairs Adviser Humayun Kobir in New Delhi.

Following the talks, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh said Mr. Khalilur Rahman conveyed Dhaka's desire to conduct foreign policy in accordance with the principle of "Bangladesh First" and called for the extradition of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. However, sourcessaid broader bilateral relations would not be "held hostage" by Ms. Hasina's presence here.

An MEA statement said the two sides agreed on "follow-on official meetings" that were expected to take place at an early date.

Modi urges MPs to back amendment to women's quota Bill

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday appealed to MPs across party lines to support a Bill to amend the Women's Reservation Act, 2023. The Bill will be tabled when the Budget Session reconvenes on April 16. The Act seeks to provide 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.

Stating that the 2029 Lok Sabha election and Assembly polls in the future must be held with the provisions for women's reservation, Mr. Modi, in an oped article, said the Bill was an important step for women of India.

"On April 16, Parliament will be convened to discuss and pass an important Bill that advances women's reservation. To describe this merely as a legislative exercise would be an understatement. It is a reflection of the aspirations of crores of women across India. It is an affirmation of a principle that has long guided our civilisational ethos, that society progresses when women progress," he said. "This moment calls for collective action. It is not about any one government, party or individual. It is about the nation as a whole recognising the importance of this step and coming together to realise it," he said, calling for "the broadest possible consensus" for the passage of the Bill.

India welcomes Pakistan-brokered Iran-U.S. ceasefire, stresses dialogue and diplomacy

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

The Indian government on Wednesday welcomed the U.S.-Iran ceasefire agreement brokered by Pakistan close to the deadline, calling for an early end to the conflict and for "unimpeded" trade flow through the Strait of Hormuz.

In a carefully worded statement, the Ministry of External Affairs did not refer directly to any of the parties in the conflict by name. Unlike other foreign ministries in other capitals, the MEA did not "thank" Pakistan for its role in mediating between both sides and for offering to host the next round of talks expected this week.

However, the MEA said it hoped that the development in West Asia "will also encourage peace efforts in Ukraine", drawing a parallel to trilateral talks between Russia, Ukraine, and the U.S.

People demonstrate on the streets of Tehran after Donald Trump agreed to a two-week ceasefire with Iran, on Wednesday. REUTERS

India is expected to further articulate its position as Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri is in Washington. After meeting visiting Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman in Delhi on Wednesday, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will travel to Mauritius on Friday for a regional Indian Ocean conference where he will meet counterparts from South Asia and West Asia, and will then fly to the United Arab Emirates for talks on April 11 and 12.

The agreement was announced overnight by U.S. President Donald Trump, less than two hours before his 8 p.m. deadline (05.30 a.m. India time) for the Iranian government to comply with his demands expired.

"We welcome the ceasefire reached and hope that it will lead to a lasting peace in West Asia," the MEA statement said, adding that "de-escalation, dialogue, and diplomacy" are essential to bring an early end to the war.

Threats and timing

"The conflict has already caused immense suffering to people and disrupted global energy supply and trade networks," it said, referring to both the airstrikes by the U.S. and Israel, and Iran as well as Iran's control of the Strait of Hormuz, where only about eight of about 25 ships stuck in the strait have been allowed to pass.

The timing of the announcement was particularly tense due to Mr. Trump's comments on Tuesday, threatening that a "whole civilisation will die", if Iran did not accept a deal and open up the strait. In an apparent climbdown, he said the ceasefire had been made to discuss Iran's 10-point proposal in response to the U.S.' 15-point proposal. However, there is little clarity that the U.S. demands would be met by Iran.

As reports suggest the next round of talks could be held in Islamabad on Friday, with U.S. Vice President J.D. Vance and Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf expected to attend.

Analysts said New Delhi would need to watch a number of factors closely, including the sustainability of the ceasefire, opening of the strait, as well as whether the role of Pakistan in the peace talks would alter India's regional balance.

Cong. chief expresses regret over remarks on people of Gujarat; BJP seeks EC action

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday expressed regret over his controversial remark describing people of Gujarat as "illiterate".

"Some remarks of mine in a recent election speech in Kerala are being deliberately misinterpreted. Even so, I express my sincere regret," he said on X, adding that he has always had, and will continue to have, the highest regard for the people of Gujarat.

The Congress chief's clarification comes days after his remarks sparked a political row.

He had said that while people in Kerala were "very clever and educated", leaders such as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan could "fool people who are illiterate in Gujarat or other places". The Bharatiya Janata Party had criticised the remarks and demanded an apology from him.

Mallikarjun Kharge

On Wednesday, the BJP sought a campaign ban and legal action against the Congress chief and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for alleged violations of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

A BJP delegation, comprising Union Ministers Virendra Kumar and Arjun Ram Meghwal and party leaders Arun Singh and Om Pathak, submitted two complaints to the Election Commission of India (EC).

In its complaint against Mr. Kharge, the BJP accused him of inciting communal hatred and promoting enmity between religious and political factions by referring to the BJP and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) as "poisonous snakes" at a recent rally in Assam.

In the second complaint, the BJP accused Ms. Banerjee of inciting violence against the Central Armed Police Forces.

Webinar to discuss biotech's role in sustainable agriculture

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The VIT-Chennai, in association with *The Hindu*, will organise a webinar on "Biotech for Sustainable Agriculture and Crop Productivity" on Sunday.

It will explore how biotechnology is reshaping modern agriculture by supporting modern farming practices, improving crop productivity, and addressing critical challenges related to food security and climate resilience.

The webinar is the fifth in a series on "Biotechnology: Role in Industry 5.0 – Sustainable Future Pathways", focusing on the evolving role of biotechnology in an industry 5.0 era driven by human-centric innovation, sustainability, and advanced technological integration.

The discussion will focus on the role of biotech in sustainable and efficient agricultural systems.

The event will feature G. Jayaraman, Professor and Dean, School of Bio Sciences and Technology, VIT-Chennai; Gayatri Venkataraman, Senior Principal Scientist, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation; Dolly Wattal Dhar, Dean, Sharda School of Agriculture Sciences, Greater Noida; and Lipin Dev, Director and partner, VT Ecogreen Technologies Pvt. Ltd., Coimbatore. The session will be moderated by journalist Soma Basu. It will be held at 11.30 a.m. Those interested may register at *newsth.live/THVITSE*

Presiding officers bypassed Parliament in rejecting CEC removal notice: INDIA

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Criticising the decision of Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Rajya Sabha Chairman C.P. Radhakrishnan to reject the notice submitted by 193 Opposition MPs seeking the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, INDIA bloc leaders on Wednesday said "collective parliamentary wisdom" had been bypassed.

They alleged that the presiding officers held a "mini-trial" of their own without revealing whom they had consulted before arriving at the decision.

Congress MP Abhishek Manu Singhvi and other Opposition leaders addressing a press conference in New Delhi on Wednesday. ANI

Rajya Sabha MP and senior Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi said the presiding officers were only required to form a "*prima facie*" view. "This means that they need to establish whether the notice is in order," he said.

Mr. Singhvi was joined by senior Trinamool Congress leaders Derek O'Brien and Sagarika Ghosh, senior RJD leader Manoj K. Jha, and AAP leader Sandeep Pathak, among others.

He explained that once such a notice is submitted, it has to be referred to an inquiry committee to probe the charges levelled. The committee then presents a report to Parliament, which takes the final call.

Mr. Singhvi said that if the Opposition's notice is not allowed to go beyond the presiding officer's table, there can never be an impeachment, and no one can be held accountable. "Instead of taking a *prima facie* view, the Chair has held a mini-trial. This is completely wrong," he added.

Manipur violence toll rises to five

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Normal life was disrupted across Manipur's Imphal Valley for the second day on Wednesday, where restrictions were imposed following a bomb attack that killed two minors at Tronglaobi in Bishnupur district on Tuesday.

Tension spiked after security forces prevented various groups from organising protest rallies. The authorities imposed the restrictions after two people, protesting the bomb attack, died in police firing. A third person died in Imphal on Wednesday.

ASSEMBLY POLLS

Rakesh Singh, out on bail, gets BJP ticket

The Bharatiya Janta Party on Wednesday chose Kolkata strongman Rakesh Singh, an accused in several cases of violence, to contest against senior Trinamool Congress leader Firhad Hakim from the Kolkata Port constituency, a day after he was released on bail. Mr. Singh was released on interim bail on Tuesday and was declared the Kolkata Port candidate. The Kolkata police had arrested him in an alleged extortion case. With the sixth and last list published on Wednesday, the BJP has finalised its candidates for all the 294 Assembly constituencies.

"He [Firhad Hakim] has been an MLA of 15 years. He has monopolised the area... If you choose your b*eta* (son) Rakesh Singh and not n*eta* (politician), then I will introduce buses and build hospitals here," Mr. Singh said.

Strongman Rakesh Singh is the BJP's candidate for Kolkata Port constituency. PTI

'Trinamool govt. snatched land of Bengal people'

BJP chief Nitin Nabin on Wednesday alleged the Mamata Banerjee-led government snatched the land which rightfully belongs to West Bengal's people and gave it to infiltrators, changing the State's demography.

Addressing an election rally in Alipurduar in north Bengal, Mr. Nabin said once the BJP forms a "double-engine" government in the State, it will rectify the demographic alterations and throw out Bangladeshi infiltrators from the State.

The residents of Bengal were being "forced" to leave the State owing to the Trinamool Congress's appeasement politics and lawlessness, the BJP chief alleged. He also asserted that the State has a special place in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's heart. PTI

"This election is not just about changing the govt. but about eradicating violence, corruption and hatred. CM of Assam is the most corrupt CM

RAHUL GANDHI
LoP in Lok Sabha

PM to address three rallies in Bengal today

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will intensify the BJP's poll campaign on Thursday with rallies in Haldia, Asansol and Siuri. The choice of venues underlines BJP's attempt to consolidate its support in areas where it has made gains while pushing into regions considered strongholds of the Trinamool Congress. PTI

"Telangana is financially bankrupt and drowning in corruption. And still, he [A. Revanth Reddy] mocked Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi

DASOJU SRAVAN
Bharat Rashtra Samithi MLC

Poll formalities: Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was re-elected from Bhabanipur in a 2021 byelection by a record margin of 58,832 votes. DEBASISH BHADURI

Stage set for a keen contest, as Mamata files papers from Bhabanipur

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee filed her nomination as the Trinamool Congress candidate for the high-stakes Bhabanipur constituency on Wednesday morning. The Trinamool chairperson is seeking a fourth term against a formidable challenge from the Opposition.

Ms. Banerjee won the Bhabanipur seat for the past three consecutive terms, starting in 2011, when her party had a historic win, which ended the 34-year Left rule in West Bengal.

With party workers crowding both sides of the road, Ms. Banerjee walked to the Alipur Survey building from her house in Kolkata. She was accompanied by her close confidant and Kolkata Mayor, Firhad Hakim.

"I am doing this with a heavy heart, so many people have been removed from the final voter list. What is the point of adding names later? The Supreme Court had said that all legitimate voters would get a chance to appeal before tribunals. We will go again and seek justice once more," the Trinamool chief said after she officially filed her nomination. This came as a response to the names of 27 lakh under-adjudication voters being deleted from the final voter list on Tuesday.

Ms. Banerjee said that she had been in Bhabanipur since her childhood and that the constituency had been central to her life. She urged the people of West Bengal to vote for Trinamool candidates in all 294 seats, asserting that the party would form the government after the election was over.

High-profile contest

The high-profile Bhabanipur contest is keenly watched as the Leader of the Opposition and Bharatiya Janata Party heavyweight, Suvendu Adhikari, is contesting the seat. Union Home Minister Amit Shah himself campaigned for Mr. Adhikari when the latter filed his nomination for the Bhabanipur seat last week. A stand-off unfolded near the CM's residence, as Trinamool and BJP workers faced off, triggering tensions and prompting police intervention to restore order.

In 2021, Ms. Banerjee contested against Mr. Adhikari from Nandigram and lost by a margin of 1,956 votes. However, she was re-elected from Bhabanipur in a byelection by a record margin of 58,832 votes.

While on the campaign trail, Mr. Adhikari has on multiple occasions stated that he would now defeat Ms. Banerjee from her home constituency, as he had in Nandigram in the previous term. Meanwhile, Ms. Banerjee has expressed confidence and has said that she would win from Bhabanipur even if only one voter was left.

Responding to Ms. Banerjee filing her nomination, Mr. Adhikari on Wednesday said that he would defeat the Chief Minister for a second time. "She and her party both will lose this time," the BJP leader said. After May 4, they would bring justice for all the wrongdoings of the Mamata Banerjee-led government, he added.

Later in the day, she held three campaign rallies. From one of her rallies, Ms. Banerjee said that the BJP's days in Bengal were numbered. "They have deleted voters from all communities. They [BJP] are forgetting that when the fire spreads, all communities will be affected," Ms. Banerjee added.

EPS, the lone star of AIADMK election campaign, steps up his pitch for power

The former Chief Minister is the main campaigner for the AIADMK across Tamil Nadu, with a stump speech focused on law and order issues, the State's finances, concerns of government employees, drug menace, and rising inflation; he also highlights features of the manifesto of his party

CAMPAIGN TRAIL

T. Ramakrishnan
CHENNAI

All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami does not have a glamour quotient like his predecessors M.G. Ramachandran and Jayalalithaa, or even the founder of the fledgling Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), C. Joseph Vijay. Neither does he possess the famed oratorical skills of former Chief Minister and Dravidian doyen M. Karunanidhi.

Yet, ever since Mr. Palaniswami occupied the seat of Chief Minister and became the driving force of his party in February 2017, he has become known for his conviction and the effective articulation of his views.

He often addresses people and the press without any script or teleprompter, only consulting notes as needed, as he did on Wednesday, while campaigning in Chennai.

He launched his campaign on March 25 after offering prayers at the Kapaleeswarar temple in Mylapore, a south Chennai constituency with a large number of educated voters, seeking votes in support of Tamilisai Soundararajan, the nominee of the Bharatiya Janata Party, an ally of the AIADMK.

Solo responsibility

EPS, as he is popularly known, bears almost the entire responsibility of his party's State-wide campaign, unlike in the rival Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam where Chief Minister M.K. Stalin shares duties with his son and Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin.

In the 2021 campaign, EPS had support from O. Panneerselvam, another former Chief Minister and then-coordinator of the party. But the duo have fallen apart, and OPS is now in the fray as the DMK's nominee in his familiar terrain of Bodinayakkannur in the southern Theni district. Of course, leaders of the AIADMK's allies also chip in, but their coverage has only limited reach.

Mr. Palaniswami, who addresses people on the campaign trail standing on a specially made multi-seater vehicle, prominently wears a sticker bearing his party's "two leaves" symbol. The first part of his stump speech is devoted to attacking the ruling DMK. Crimes against women, "deteriorating" law and order, the prevalence of drugs, and the "worsening" finances of the State government are some of the issues that have repeatedly figured in his speeches for the past few years.

In the spotlight: AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami addressing an election campaign in Tiruvannamalai district on April 4. C. VENKATACHALAPATHY

The AIADMK leader makes it a point to cover issues concerning government employees and pensioners. Resuming his campaign in Chennai's Velachery on Wednesday morning – this time, near the Pallava-era Dhandeeswarar temple – for his party's nominee and former legislator, M.K. Ashok, Mr. Palaniswami talked about how many people have retired from government service in the past five years and how many were recruited, pointing to the net reduction in staff strength. At this point in his speech, he usually brings up the DMK's 2021 poll promise to restore the Old Pension Scheme, slamming the ruling party's failure to keep its word.

Inflation is one of the core themes of his speech, and Mr. Palaniswami often compares the prices of essential commodities during the previous AIADMK reign and the present DMK regime. He also details how tax rates and user charges have shot up in the past five years. Using these two reasons, he justifies his party's promise to make a one-time payment of ₹10,000 to the State's women as a form of "relief".

Mr. Palaniswami also highlights features of the party manifesto, including the free distribution of refrigerators, three free refills of cooking gas cylinders per year, and the extension of the free bus travel scheme to men.

Before leaving for his next campaign stop, Mr. Palaniswami briefly engages the audience, raising slogans such as "*Makkalai Kappom, Tamizhagathai Meetpom* (Let us protect the people, reclaim Tamil Nadu)", and "Stalin Model *Arasu,* Failure Model *Arasu* (Stalin's governance model is a failed model)".

Promise of jobs remains big highlight of poll manifestos of Left Front and Congress

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The promise of jobs, especially for youth, is a highlight in the manifestos of both the Communist Party of India (Marxist)-led Left Front and the Congress, ahead of the West Bengal Assembly election.

While the Left Front manifesto released on Saturday promised one permanent job for every family, the Congress, which announced its manifesto on Tuesday, vowed that all vacant government posts will be filled in the first Cabinet meeting if the party comes to power.

The 15-page manifesto of the Left Front sought to focus on key issues instead of 'mandir-masjid' politics. The Left Front will provide a 100-day job guarantee for poor people living in urban areas, and 200 days job guarantee for the poor in rural Bengal, the alliance chairman Biman Bose said.

The Congress manifesto, which was released by party president Mallikarjun Kharge, mentioned the Yuva Samman, under which the party has promised funding for start-ups and establishment of AI centres as well.

Jobs are an important issue in the 2026 Assembly election, and Union Home Minister Amit Shah has announced that if his party is elected to power, it will implement the Seventh Pay Commission for State government employees. Mr. Shah has also promised an age relaxation for candidates who lost out because of the "corruption of the Trinamool Congress" in giving jobs to the people of the State.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Left Front Chairman Biman Bose releasing the manifestos of their parties in Bengal. PTI

Cash incentives

West Bengal has been grappling with the migration of a million workers from the State, largely seeking jobs. Just before the polls were announced, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced the Banglar Yuva Sathi scheme to provide ₹1,500 per month to unemployed youth between 20 and 40 years of age. About 80 lakh youth have filled the form to receive monthly entitlements. The West Bengal ruling party's manifesto, called "*Didi*'s Ten Promises", speaks about cash incentive schemes but remains silent on jobs.

The Left Front also promised initiatives for heavy and medium scale industrialisation, and vowed to set up new software and hardware parks.

The Congress manifesto, which announces 'Five guarantees for West Bengal', looks like a copy of the Trinamool Congress's poll promises. While the Trinamool is putting its faith in its Lakshmir Bhandar scheme, under which ₹1,500 per month is given to every woman, the Congress has promised to implement Durga Samman, offering women a ₹2,000 payout each month.

Another Congress scheme which appears to be a mirror image of a Trinamool promise is the Bidhan Swastha Suraksha, which promises health insurance for every family up to ₹10 lakh.

Khera moves Telangana HC, seeks anticipatory bail in case filed by Assam CM's wife

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Pawan Khera on Wednesday moved the Telangana High Court seeking anticipatory bail in a case filed in Guwahati in connection with his allegations against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife.

The leader, who showed his residential address in Hyderabad, requested the court to release him on bail in the event of his arrest. Mr. Khera's wife hails from Telangana and he has a residence in Hyderabad. The State is ruled by the Congress. The petition will be taken up on Thursday morning.

In his petition for anticipatory bail, Mr. Khera has pleaded that he is a law-abiding citizen, has no criminal antecedents and holds a responsible position in the principal opposition party. The Congress leader said he is ready to cooperate in the case against him and hence be given pre-arrest bail.

Mr. Khera accused Mr. Sarma of "unleashing" the State police on him, instead of responding to questions raised by the Opposition over alleged foreign investments and multiple passports linked to the latter's wife.

The Congress leader's charge came after a team of Assam Police landed in Delhi on Tuesday and searched his flat in the Nizamuddin area of Delhi.

The Assam Police and Delhi Police coming out of Congress leader Pawan Khera's residence in New Delhi on Tuesday. ANI

Complaint filed

The police action followed a criminal complaint by Mr. Sarma's entrepreneur wife, Riniki Bhuyan Sharma, alleging that the Congress had used forged and fake documents to target her. The case was registered in the Guwahati Crime Branch Police Station against Mr. Khera under several sections of the BNS, including 175 (false statement in connection with an election), 35 (Right of private defence of the body and of property) and 318 (cheating).

In a recorded video message from an undisclosed location, Mr. Khera said the Congress had only sought answers and would continue to do so. "Scaring others may be your habit, but getting scared is not ours," he said, adding that he was avoiding the police because he had "more questions to ask".

The Congress leader reiterated allegations relating to a purported company in Wyoming in the United States linked to Ms. Riniki Bhuyan Sharma, claiming the firm listed addresses in London, Dubai, and Dhaka. He also alleged links to another entity registered in the United Kingdom, and referred to earlier claims about multiple foreign passports and a UAE 'golden visa'.

"Once again, through him (Mr. Khera), they have released another set of completely fabricated documents – already exposed by our team. This is not politics any more. This is outright deception," Mr. Sarma said in a post on social media platform X.

(With PTI inputs)

INBRIEF

Rooftop solar: govt. planning incentive scheme for States

To meet its target of one crore PM Surya Ghar households by March 2027, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is encouraging States to adopt a "utility-led aggregation (ULA)" model, whereby State electricity distribution companies will fund the installation of rooftop solar systems for households that either cannot afford them or lack the infrastructure to install them. Though this scheme has been in force since mid-2025, it has not been popular. The Ministry is mooting an incentive scheme to make this more attractive to States. "With this scheme, we should be able to cover 30 lakh households," Renewable Energy Minister Pralhad Joshi said on Wednesday.

Delhi HC terms Rana Ayyub's tweets derogatory, communal

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday said that "action is necessary in view of the highly derogatory, inflammatory, and communal tweets" posted by journalist Rana Ayyub between 2013-2017. Justice Purushaindra Kumar Kaurav, hearing the plea alleging that Ms. Ayyub's tweets insulted Hindu deities and "revered historical figures", noted that an FIR had also been against her over her tweets. "The matter requires urgent consideration," the court said, while posting the case for hearing on Friday. The court also issued notice to Ms. Ayyub as well as social media platform X on the plea seeking the immediate removal of the tweets posted by her.

Textbook row: academics ask President to intervene

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

Fifty-one academics have written to President Droupadi Murmu to urgently intervene and ask the Union Ministry of Education to request the Supreme Court to withdraw the ban on the Class 8 social science textbook, which courted controversy over a subsection on "corruption in judiciary", and immediately allow its online publication without the chapter on the judiciary.

In a letter dated April 7, several professors appealed to the President that the Centre should request the Supreme Court to waive off the harsh punishment imposed on three respected educationists in the matter.

In the letter, the academics called the court's intervention in the issue "a case of judicial overreach". "Since, in India, a book can be banned only by law, the Supreme Court overreached its powers in banning the textbook," it said.

"We feel concerned that the Supreme Court's ban on the book has prevented educational experts, teachers and other stakeholders from objectively examining the contentious chapter," the letter further stated.

India withdraws bid to host climate summit in 2028

The government cites a review of its 2028 commitments, says report; the country had last hosted the summit in 2002, when it was a low-key affair

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

India has withdrawn its bid to host the 33rd edition of the Conference of Parties (COP 33) in 2028 – the annual United Nations climate talks, according to a report by Climate Home News (CHN) on Wednesday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced India's interest in hosting the COP33 at the COP28 in Dubai in 2023.

The Ministry for Environment, Forests and Climate Change did not comment on the report, but *The Hindu* has independently confirmed its veracity.

According to the CHN report, an April 2 letter by Rajat Agrawal, Joint Secretary in the Environment Ministry, to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) stated that India was withdrawing its candidacy following a "review of its commitments for 2028".

The COP30 was held in Brazil and the COP31 is to be jointly hosted by Turkiye and Australia this year. AP

In July 2025, the Environment Ministry set up a dedicated cell for the "professional and logistical requirements" for organising the COP33. This followed a joint declaration at the 17th BRICS summit on July 7, where the member countries "welcomed" India's candidacy.

The hosting of the COP rotates among the UN's five regional groups, with India belonging to the Asia Pacific group.

The COP30 was held in Brazil. The edition this year is to be jointly hosted by Turkiye and Australia and the 2027 summit (COP32) is scheduled to be held in Ethiopia. With India withdrawing, South Korea is the only country that has so far expressed interest in hosting the COP33. India has hosted the summit only once – in 2002 (COP8) – when it was a relatively low-key affair.

On March 25, India announced its updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), committing by 2035 to source 60% of its installed electricity capacity from non-fossil sources, reduce emissions intensity of GDP by 47%, and increase its carbon sink by 3.5-4 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent.

India-Turkiye talks hint at a thaw in bilateral relations

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Ministry describes the talks as a comprehensive review of current state of bilateral ties

In the first sign that India and Turkiye could be working to restore bilateral relations ruptured during the India-Pakistan conflict last year, officials from both countries held the 12th round of Foreign Office Consultations (FoC) on Wednesday.

The talks, between delegations led by Turkish Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Berris Ekinci and Ministry of External Affairs Secretary (West) Sibi George in Delhi, were held four years after the last round in 2022 in Ankara. Relations have been tense over a number of statements by Turkiye President Recep Erdogan on Kashmir, and spiralled last May over Turkiye's military support to Pakistan during the Operation Sindoor conflict.

Comprehensive review

"The discussions focused on areas such as trade and investments, tourism, technology and innovation, energy, cooperation in educational and cultural fields, people to people ties, and fight against cross border terrorism," the Ministry of External affairs said in a statement, referring to the talks as "a comprehensive review of the current state of bilateral relations".

"The two sides also exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest," it added.

New Delhi and Ankara's move to revive bilateral talks comes days after Mr. George travelled to Azerbaijan, where ties had also been strained over its government's support to Pakistan in statements and military assistance, particularly on the supply of drones, and indicates that the Modi government may be revising its position on the issue.

Former Indian diplomats also said the development reflected a more realistic approach to relations. "In an era of growing global disorder, India-Türkiye talks reflect a pragmatic effort to manage differences and keep lines of communication open," said Vikas Swarup, who retired as Secretary (West) in the MEA (2019-2021) and had served in the Embassy at Ankara.

Steps into the past: 1,500-year-old reservoir unearthed on Elephanta Island near Mumbai

T.S. Subramanian

As we trudged through the scrub jungle on a hill on the Elephanta Island off the Mumbai coast on March 17, Abhijit Ambekar declared with a flourish, "We will show you the wonder-discovery of our excavation." Professor Abhijit Dandekar chipped in, "It is a show-stopper."

As we reached the trench, where several men and women were excavating the soil deep below, it was clear that it was a spectacular discovery. There it was: a series of steps leading to a reservoir below. In other words, it was a stepped reservoir or a reservoir built with a wide staircase of perfectly aligned stone blocks.

The stepped reservoir excavated by the Mumbai Circle of the ASI on the Elephanta Island, off the Mumbai coast. ASI

Dr. Ambekar, director of the current excavation and Superintending Archaeologist, Mumbai Circle of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), estimated the stepped reservoir to be about 1,500 years old.

"It is a massive structure – about 14.7 metres long, and 6.7 metres and 10.8 metres wide, forming a T-shape. The excavation has reached a depth of five metres so far. We have exposed 20 steps. The steps are built with stone-blocks which are not from the island. They were ferried from the mainland," he said.

While rock-cut cisterns have been found earlier on the Elephanta Island, the discovery of this stepped reservoir was important because it was a carefully designed architecture for storing water, Dr. Ambekar said. "Although the island receives a large amount of rainfall from the monsoon, very little seeps into the soil because of the island's rocky nature, and the water runs off into the sea," he said. Hence, this stepped reservoir, which was "a remarkable engineering work."

The ASI's Mumbai Circle began the excavation here in November 2025. It has excavated 19 trenches, each measuring 10 metres x 10 metres.

The excavation has so far yielded a beautifully built brick structure, which could be a dyeing vat for colouring textiles, a big storage pot, terracotta figurines, glass and stone bangles, beads made of carnelian and quartz and stone anchors. A total of about 3,000 amphorae sherds of Mediterranean origin and torpedo jar sherds from West Asia, including Mesopotamia, have been unearthed. Amphorae and torpedo jars were used for storing wine, oil and fish sauce. Their potsherds showed the island's long-distance maritime contacts.

Importantly, 60 copper, lead and silver coins have so far been found in the excavations. Several copper coins have been identified as belonging to ruler Krishnaraja of the Kalachuri dynasty of the sixth century CE, said Dr. Abhijit Dandekar, Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology of Deccan College, Pune.

The identification was made on the basis of the motif of a seated bull on the obverse and a temple symbol with the legend of Sri Krishnaraja on the reverse, he said.

Mohsina Kidwai, a former Union Minister and veteran Congress leader, passes away

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Veteran Congress leader Mohsina Kidwai, a former Union Minister who held several key portfolios under the former Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, passed away in Noida on Wednesday. She was 94.

She had been suffering from age-related ailments, her son-in-law Razi Ur Rehman Kidwai said.

Ms. Kidwai had a public career spanning more than six decades. She served multiple terms in the Lok Sabha and later in the Rajya Sabha and was a member of the Congress Working Committee and the party's Central Election Committee.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, in a post on X, described her as a stalwart who devoted over six decades to public service and remained a guiding force for the Congress through difficult periods. "Her passing is a profound loss to the Congress party and to the nation," Mr. Kharge said.

Mohsina Kidwai

The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, said her life was an example of dedication to public service. "With her simplicity, gentleness, and dignified political success, she inspired several generations of women in the country," he said in a post on X.

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor termed her a "titan" of the party who embodied an era of politics marked by decorum and steadfast loyalty.

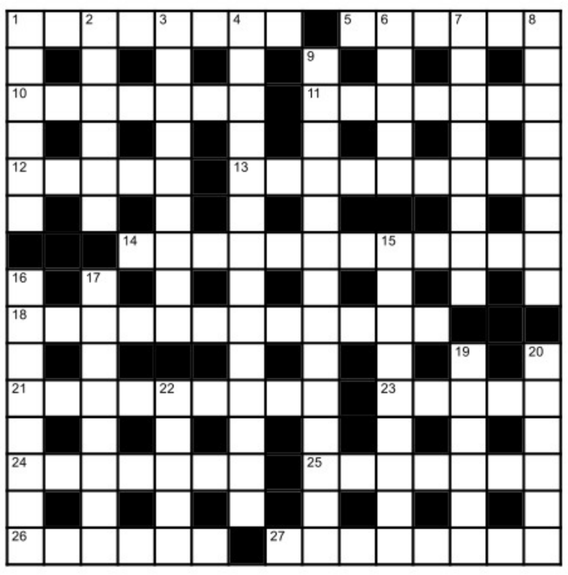
Ms. Kidwai held several Union government portfolios, including Labour, Health and Family Welfare, Rural Development, Transport, and Urban Development. Her political journey began in 1960 when she was elected to the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council at the age of 28. She later became a Minister in the State government and entered national politics after winning the 1978 by-election from Azamgarh.

TH CROSSWORD + 14763

(set by Dr. X)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Began to sing in lorry, enthralled by drink (6,2)
5 Prepare for major housing amendment (6)
10 Guide in rough terrain (7)
11 Pep up in final, making a comeback after catch (7)
12 A little lamp in back row's illuminated again (5)
13 Racing with caution on essentially dangerous circuit (9)
14 What bats will do to remain united (4,8)
18 Emphatic about criminal being unstable (12)
21 Disastrous match! Coming to grips with primarily shocking collapse (9)
23 Rude lady breaks heart, goes round with model (5)
24 Kind of stop without electronic tollgate perhaps (7)
25 Small amount of dope after a little meth in endless party (7)
26 British sailors in foreign isle, extremely matey (6)
27 Despicable boy advanced to ensnare good girl (8)

Down

1 Lampoon American involved in agitation on base (6)
2 Truly perk up after consuming ecstasy (6)
3 Pressurise with rooks on column (9)
4 Unidentifiable bag in enclosure, suspicious (14)
6 Remove saree naughtily (5)
7 Completely unacceptable massage by houseguest on vacation (8)
8 Cribs about primarily arrogant administrators (8)
9 Secures fantastic sandwiches, tart and bit of tiramisu for dessert (9,5)
15 Honouring Lennon with big bust (9)
16 Did 'Lungi Dance' in Indian city (8)
17 Blizzard in sector, I'm worried (3,5)
19 Need enormous runs to win final of competition (6)
20 Error to retain tenor, extremely grumpy and mean (6)
22 Contestant wanting special watch (5)

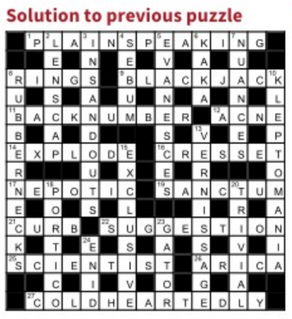
SUDOKU

		9	8			6		
		8		5	1			2
4								8
	9		7		5	8		
			2		8			
		1	6		3		4	
2								4
1			5	8		9		
		5			6	1		

No.SS6845 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

6	5	8	1	7	9	3	2	4
4	3	1	5	2	8	6	7	9
2	9	7	6	4	3	8	1	5
3	6	9	8	5	2	7	4	1
5	8	4	7	1	6	9	3	2
1	7	2	3	9	4	5	6	8
8	4	5	2	6	7	1	9	3
9	1	6	4	3	5	2	8	7
7	2	3	9	8	1	4	5	6

FAITH

Murugan is known as Guha

One of Lord Murugan's names is Guha, said So.So. Meenakshisundaram in a discourse. An old man had three sons, all of whom were married and had one child each. One day all the three infants cried at the same time. Alarmed, the old man asked his daughters-in-law why the babies were crying. The first one said the child had wet itself, and now that she had changed the napkin, the baby would soon stop crying. The second daughter-in-law said her child was afraid of darkness. She had lit a lamp in the room, and so the child would no longer be afraid. The third daughter-in-law said her child did not like being left alone. She had picked him up and had placed him on her lap. So he too would stop crying.

So we can infer that most babies do not like lying on a wet surface or darkness and they do not like being alone. And yet, these three are unavoidable until a baby is born into this world. The mother's womb is dark; the child there cannot avoid water; and the child is alone too. So how does the child cope in these uncomfortable surroundings? It manages, because it isn't really alone. There is a deity inside, who stays guard. That deity is Murugan, also known as Guha. Guha means cave. Because Murugan is beside every baby in the dark, cavernous womb of a mother, He is known as Guha. Guha guards the baby, and talks with it. He makes it clear to the baby that He will stay beside him/her only so long as he or she is in the mother's womb. Once the baby is born, Murugan no longer stays beside the infant. But He comes the moment He is called. There is no limit to Murugan's prowess. He is the embodiment of limitless bliss. He is omniscient.

INBRIEF

NTPC inks MoU with Électricité de France

State-owned National Thermal Power Corp Ltd. (NTPC) said it had inked a non-binding memorandum of understanding (MoU) with French counterpart Électricité de France (EDF) to explore opportunities in India's nuclear power space. According to a statement, the two entities would seek to establish a framework for jointly assessing "feasibility and approach for collaboration". NTPC is targeting to institute 30 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047.

IRDAI issues revised cybersecurity guidelines

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) has issued revised guidelines on information and cybersecurity. The guidelines are intended to enable the insurance industry further strengthen their defences as well as related governance mechanisms to deal with emerging cyberthreats, IRDAI said in a communication addressed to all insurers, insurance intermediaries and the Insurance Information Bureau (IIB).

Cyient Semiconductors buys 74% in Kinetic Tech for $85 mn

Cyient Semiconductors has acquired 74% stake in power semiconductor solutions provider Kinetic Technologies for $85 million. The investment reflects a broader strategic shift toward building a differentiated, custom silicon and ASSP-led semiconductor platform aligned with long-term structural demand in power and compute infrastructure, addressing a $44 billion global market opportunity, Cyient Semiconductors said in a release.

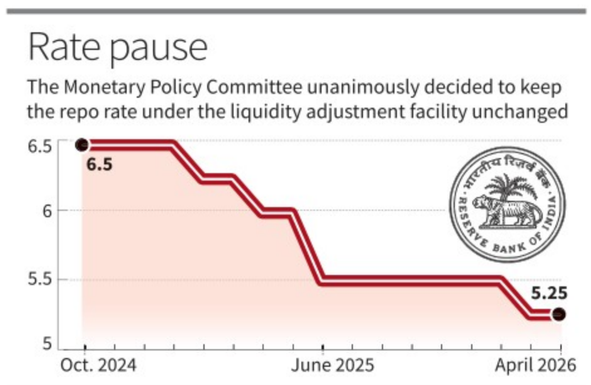
MPC factors in ceasefire to keep repo rate unchanged

Intensity and duration of West Asia conflict, damage to energy and other infra add risk to inflation and growth outlooks, says panel, cuts growth forecast to 6.9%, hikes inflation projection to 4.5%

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Hours after Donald Trump announced on social media about the conditional temporary ceasefire in West Asia, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) unanimously voted to hold the repo rate at 5.25%. It also decided to continue with the neutral stance.

Later, addressing a press conference, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Sanjay Malhotra said that the ceasefire, to some extent, has been taken into account in the monetary policy decision.



Low interest rates

Mr. Malhotra said despite the impact of the war in West Asia, there was a possibility of having low interest rates in the short to medium term in India.

Stating that the West Asia conflict would impede growth, the MPC opined that the intensity and the duration of the conflict and the resultant damage to the energy and other infrastructure added risk to the inflation and growth outlooks.

The economy is confronted with a supply shock, it emphasised. Going forward, elevated energy and other commodity prices, as also shocks to availability of inputs due to disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, were likely to impact growth in 2026-27, it added.

Taking various factors into consideration, the real GDP growth forecast for 2026-27 has been reduced by 70 bps to 6.9%.

And the CPI inflation for 2026-27 had been projected a tad higher at 4.5% from 4.4% earlier.

The RBI has factored in crude price at $85 a barrel in the inflation forecast for this year and $75 for next year. Stating that the global economic conditions and sentiment had soured after the outbreak of the West Asia conflict, the MPC said these had adversely impacted the growth-inflation outlook.

The MPC noted that geopolitical uncertainties had heightened significantly and the upside risks to the inflation outlook, driven by increased energy price pressures and probable weather disturbances affecting food prices, had increased.

Elevated crude prices to increase imported inflation, widen CAD: Malhotra

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Sanjay Malhotra

Despite the unprecedented geopolitical disturbances in West Asia and supply chain disruptions as well as its resultant impact on the global economy, Reserve Bank of India Governor Sanjay Malhotra on Wednesday said the fundamentals of the Indian economy remained on a stronger footing at the current juncture than in previous crisis episodes, providing it with 'greater resilience to withstand shocks'.

However, Mr. Malhotra noted that elevated crude oil prices could increase imported inflation and widen the current account deficit. He said the disruptions in energy markets, fertilisers and other commodities may adversely impact industry, agriculture and services, reducing domestic output.

"The heightened uncertainty, increased risk aversion and safe haven demand could impact domestic liquidity conditions, economic activity, consumption and investment and weaker global growth prospects may dampen external demand and reduce remittance flows and adverse spillovers from global financial markets could tighten domestic financial conditions and raise the cost of borrowing," he said.

Overall, the initial supply shock can potentially transform into a demand shock over the medium term if the restoration of supply chains is delayed, he emphasised.

To a question on the impact on remittances, RBI Deputy Governor Poonam Gupta said, "Our remittances come from diverse jurisdictions in which the share of the Gulf countries have declined over time. If you look at the last 10 to 15 years data they [remittances from all geographies] have moved in the upward direction. So we are not anticipating any dip to the remittances because it [the war going by the social media post] is going to be resolved soon."

"We anticipate that the demand for migrant workers will infact increase from this [Gulf] region which will help the remittances," she added.

She said besides geographical diversity, remittances are coming from a diverse skill pool which includes low-skilled, mid-skilled and high-skilled migrant workers across countries.

Cabinet panel okays 84% hike to HPCL project cost

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

To provide a boost to domestic petrochemicals production, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on Wednesday approved an 84% increase in the project cost of HPCL Rajasthan Refinery Ltd. from ₹43,129 crore to ₹79,459 crore.

Further, HPCL would pump in an additional equity investment of ₹8,962 crore, thus bringing the total equity investment after the increment to 19,600 crore.

The project is a joint venture between HPCL and the Government of Rajasthan, with the latter holding an equity stake of 26%.

Indices surge 4%, see 'best day in five years

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

Benchmark Nifty 50 and Sensex rose almost 4% on Wednesday, their best day in a single session in five years after crude prices saw the first huge decline on April 8.

Nifty 50 and Sensex opened at 23,855.15 and 77,290.6, and kept up the momentum for the better part of the day before closing at 23,997 points and 77,562.9 points respectively. The benchmark indices are thus inching closer to pre-war levels.

The rally comes on top of a low base of March, when markets dipped over 11%. All sectoral indices improved and 278 stocks hit the upper circuit.

West Asia crisis: Centre increases fertilizer sop for kharif season

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Amid concerns of a possible rise in fertilizer prices on account of the situation in West Asia, the Union Cabinet here approved an increase of about 12% in nutrient-based subsidy for Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers for the ongoing kharif crop season.

Effective April 1 and up to September 30 this year, the tentative budgetary need for the subsidy would be ₹41,533.81 crore.

"This is approximately ₹4,317 crore more than the budgetary requirement for kharif 2025 season. The budget for kharif 2025 was ₹37,216.15 crore," the Union Government said.

The Government maintained by increasing the subsidy, the availability of fertilizers to farmers at subsidised, affordable and reasonable prices will be ensured. The move will also result in the rationalisation of subsidy on P&K fertilizers due to recent trends in global prices of fertilizers and inputs.

The Centre is now making available 28 grades of P&K fertilizers to farmers at subsidised rates through fertilizer firms/importers.

Govt. okays 2 hydro units in Arunachal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In a boost to hydro-electric power in Arunachal Pradesh, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved an investment of ₹26,069.5 crore in the construction of Kamala Hydro Electric project alongside a sum of ₹14,105.83 crore to build the Kalai-II hydro-electric project.

The Kamala Hydro-electric project would account for a total installed capacity of 1,720 megawatts and expected to generate 6,870 million units of energy a year. It spans Kamle, Kra Daadi and Kurung Kumey districts of the State. The Kalai-II hydro-electric project, would have an installed capacity of 1,200 MW and generate 4,852.95 million units annually.

Govt. extends bulk commercial LPG allocation to more sectors

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Expanding the availability and supply of liquified petroleum gas (LPG) to industrial sectors, the Petroleum Ministry, in a communication to States, sought that industrial units in pharma, agriculture, uranium, metal, ceramic, foundry and aerosol, among other sectors, receive 70% of bulk non-domestic LPG based on the consumption assessed pre-March this year.

Earlier, the industrial beneficiaries of commercial LPG allocation included steel, plastics, food industry and chemical sectors, among others.

This would, however, be subject to an overall sectoral limit of 0.2 thousand metric tonne (TMT)/day.

The communication emphasised priority be given to units where LPG is required for specialised purposes. Though the latest communication also seeks a transition to piped natural gas (PNG) to avail bulk LPG allocation, it accords an exception for industries where LPG serves specialised purposes in the manufacturing process and PNG may not serve as an adequate substitute.

Shippers seek clarity as Iran still controls strait of Hormuz

M. Kalyanaraman
Debayan Tewari
CHENNAI

On Day 1 of ceasefire, nearly 10 vessel exits through the Strait of Hormuz have been reported by Rystad Energy, a Norway-based energy research firm. Of these, four are likely "dark" Iranian tankers, two are bulk carriers and one is a mid-size tanker.

"Looking ahead, there is little expectation flows will normalise in the near term," says Erik Grundt, Senior Data Analyst at Rystad Energy.

While ship owners and charterers were preparing for a quick exit, they were also awaiting more clarity on the terms and conditions for transit given the indications that Iran still exercises de-facto control over the strait.

Technical limitations

Iran says safe passage will involve its armed forces and there are "technical limitations" though the U.S. President has talked about "complete, immediate safe opening." Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization, Arsenio Dominguez, has said that he is working with relevant parties to implement an appropriate mechanism to ensure the safe transit of ships through the strait.

Hundreds of ships are stranded west of the Persian Gulf, fearing attacks and damage to cargo, vessel structure and lives of seafarers. Among them were some 35 ships, either Indian-flagged or foreign flagged carrying cargo for India, three weeks into the war. Nearly 22 energy-critical vessels were marked for evacuation with Indian naval assistance. This included three LNG carriers, 12 LPG carriers and seven crude oil tankers. Eight Indian flagged LPG carriers have crossed the strait and come to India since then.

"Though ceasefire has been announced, we are waiting for clearance from Indian government before our ships will move. We understand that we are bringing supplies essential for the everyday lives of Indians. But the safety of our ships and lives of seafarers onboard are at stake," says a source among shipowners. He adds the war risk premiums are several times higher for moving ships, so, choosing to move now is also a commercial decision. "We would like relief from government in terms of supporting our war risk insurance payments," he says.

Before the war started, while Iran and Oman had territorial waters falling in the strait, no country controlled the transit of ships that was free. A few weeks into the war, Lloyd's List reported Iran had put in place a system for approving ship transits that could have involved payments. There was a process and ships had to hug the Iranian coast and go around the Iranian Larak Island for visual approval as well. Transits, which had trickled to a handful following the start of war, then rose to 10% of pre-war levels in April, though many of them were Iran-linked.

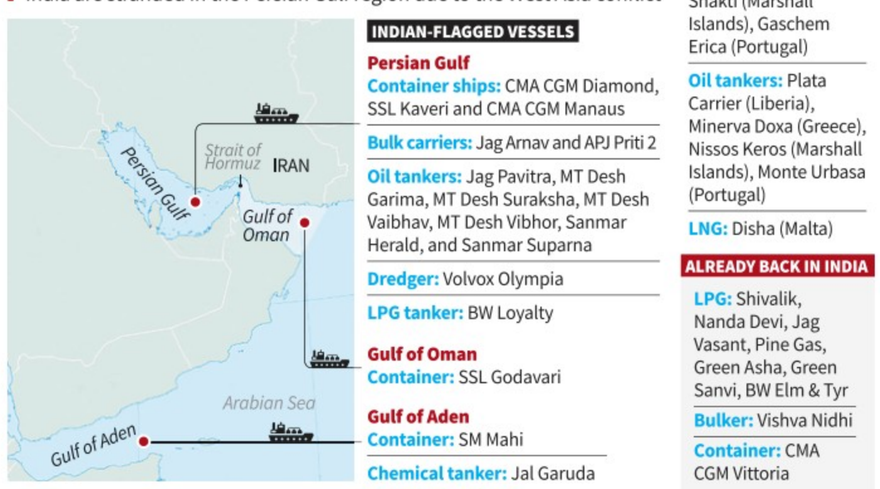
"As far as shipowners are concerned, it is still Iran that remains in effective control of the strait and permission will need to be sought from the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps," says Richard Meade, editor-in-chief of Lloyd's List.

Jakob Larsen, chief safety and security officer, of Bimco, an international organisation representing shipowners, charterers and agents, says that the shipping industry is currently awaiting technical details from the U.S. and from Iran on how to transit the Strait of Hormuz safely. "Leaving the Persian Gulf without prior coordination with the U.S. and Iran would entail heightened risk and would not be advisable," he says, adding Iran still reportedly has significant amounts of weapons to control shipping through the strait, including anti-ship missiles, drones, fast attack craft, coastal artillery and mines.

Likely transit fee

Meanwhile, Iranian Ambassador to China Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli told the media in Beijing Iran was considering transit fee for the Strait of Hormuz. Iran would work with neighbouring countries to ensure safe passage via the Strait but the 'main safety guarantee would come from Iran,' he said. At the peak of conflict, there were 22 Indian-flagged vessels in the Persian Gulf region (West of Strait of Hormuz), two in the Gulf of Oman (East of Strait of Hormuz), one in the Gulf of Aden and two in the Red Sea.

(With PTI inputs)



READ
FRONTLINE
LEADING THE DEBATE SINCE 1984
EVERY FORTNIGHT.
TO SUBSCRIBE, VISIT
www.thehindugroup.in/subscribe

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY
PARADIP PORT-754142, ODISHA (INDIA)
ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT
(ESTATE-WING)
No.AD/EST/LAND-I-59/2024(Pt.II)/1131
Dt.01.04.2026
e-Tender-cum-e-Auction Notice
An e-Tender-cum-e-Auction Notice invites bids for **"Allotment of 2 nos. patches of Port land about 25 acres each for handling of Containers along with Dry Bulk & Break Bulk Cargo on long term lease basis for a period of 30 years"** is available in the website from **01.04.2026 to 21.04.2026**. For details, interested bidders may log on the website **https://eprocure.gov.in/ eprocure/app**.
Sr.Dy.Secretary,
Paradip Port Authority
PPA/PR/03/2026-2027, dt.07/04/2026

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS - TIRUPATI
MARKETING DEPARTMENT
e-Procurement Tender Notice
e-Tenders are invited for supply of **40,000 Kgs of Roasted Vermicelli** through e-tenders to the Marketing Department, T.T.Devasthanams. For Tender notice and tender details log on to the web site **http:// www.tirumala.org** and **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in.** For further details contact phone numbers: **0877-2264079, 2264555**, FAX No: **0877-2264554**.
TTD-40021(31)/1/2026-PRO SEC(Adv.No.08) Date:08-04-2026
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

THE HUTTI GOLD MINES COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Hutti - 584 115, Raichur Dist., Karnataka State. Phone: 08537-276339
e-Mail: material276339@gmail.com website: www.huttigold.karnataka.gov.in
T.NO.42/25-26 No.HGML/2025-26/PREQUAL_TENDER_NUMBER_3
Date: 09.04.2026
Tender Notification: Invitation for Expression of Interest (EOI)
Expression of Interest (EOI) for empanelment of Chartered Accountant/Cost Accountant firms.
Interested consultant/consultancy, firm/individual consultants shall visit the link **https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** for necessary details like General conditions, eligibility criteria, etc., The interested agencies need to register with KPPP Portal GoK, for participating in EOI.
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS : Pre-bid meeting (Zoom) : **15.04.2026 at 11.00 AM.** Last date for receipt of Bid : **25.04.2026 at 4.00 PM.** Date & Time for Opening of EOI Bid : **27.04.2026 at 10.00 AM.**
Sd/- I/c. Dy. General Manager (Materials)
LEADING GOLD PRODUCER IN INDIA

WASHINGTON

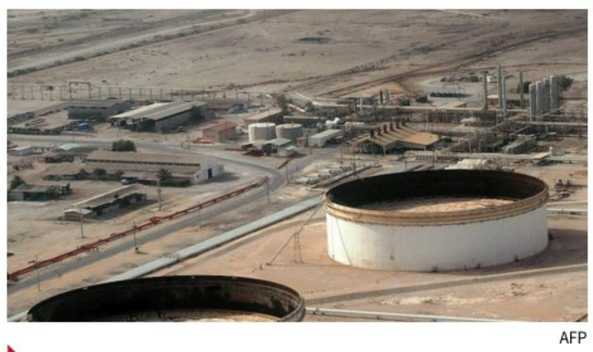
Trump sending V-P to Pakistan for Iran talks on Saturday: White House

AFP

U.S. President Donald Trump is sending Vice-President J.D. Vance and other negotiators to the Pakistani capital for talks with Iran that will begin on Saturday, the White House said. Mr. Trump "is dispatching his negotiating team led by J.D. Vance, (Steve) Witkoff and (Jared) Kushner," Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said. AFP

TEHRAN

Iran attacked Kuwait, UAE after strikes on its oil facilities: state TV



AFP

Iran launched missile and drone attacks on Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates after air strikes against oil facilities on its Lavan island on Wednesday morning, state television reported. The Lavan refinery processes crude extracted from a nearby oilfield which supplies Iran's highest quality oil for export. AFP

DHAKA

Bangladesh Parliament endorses ban on Hasina's Awami League

REUTERS

Bangladesh's Parliament on Wednesday passed a law endorsing the previous interim government's order to disband deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League party. The new law would continue the suspension of the Awami League's registration with Election Commission, Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed said. PTI

BEIJING

Afghanistan, Pakistan agree to avoid escalation in conflict: China

AP

Pakistan and Afghanistan have agreed to avoid any escalation in their armed conflict, during talks hosted by China in recent days, Beijing said on Wednesday. The neighbours have been locked in violent confrontation over claims from Islamabad that Afghanistan is harbouring militants responsible for cross-border attacks. AFP

In Iran, Trump faces the limits of American power

The U.S.-Israeli war on Iran has not just failed to achieve its declared objectives but also reinforced Iran's standing as a major regional power in West Asia; under attack, Iran ensured decapitation would not affect the coherence of the state; Tehran widened the conflict by attacking U.S. bases in the region and by taking control of the Strait of Hormuz, Iran dragged the global economy into the conflict

NEWS ANALYSIS

Stanly Johny

"There will be no deal with Iran except UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER!," U.S. President Donald Trump said on March 6, the seventh day of the war. On April 8, on the 40th day of the war, Mr. Trump announced a two-week ceasefire, hours after he threatened to erase the Iranian civilisation if Tehran did not accept his deal.

Mr. Trump also agreed to treat an Iranian proposal as "a workable basis" for future talks. Iran said it would honour the ceasefire and ensure "safe passage" of vessels through the Strait of Hormuz "in coordination with its forces".

While it is too early to conclude whether the ceasefire would hold or it would lead to a lasting peace agreement, one thing is clear – the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran has not just failed to achieve its declared objectives but also reinforced Iran's standing as a major regional power in West Asia, particularly.

When he launched the war on February 28, Mr. Trump outlined five broad objectives: to "raze" Iran's missile industry "to the ground"; to "annihilate" Iran's Navy; to ensure that Iran's "proxies" could no longer "destabilise" the region; to prevent Iran from ever obtaining a nuclear weapon; and to bring about regime change. None of this has been met.

Forty days later, however, his biggest demand was one that was not part of his original set of objectives – reopen Hormuz.

Iran got pounded over the past 40 days. It lost several top leaders, including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, Defence Council chief Ali Shamkhani and Security Council chief Ali Larijani. Its manufacturing facilities, petrochemical complexes, gas fields, oil depots, rail tracks, universities and even bridges were bombed. The damage is a major setback for an economy already in crisis.

Iran's three moves

But Iran made three moves that allowed it to play what Trita Parsi, of the Quincy Institute, calls the "longer game". First, it ensured that decapitation would not affect the coherence of the state or its ability to fight back – a strategy likely put in place after the June 2025 war when Israel killed multiple Iranian military leaders. Second, Iran immediately regionalised the conflict by attacking American bases in the Persian Gulf. The accuracy and lethality of these strikes suggest that Tehran had prepared for this moment. As Vali Nasr, of Johns Hopkins University, told *The Hindu*, Iran turned the entire Persian Gulf into a battlefield. Third, by taking control of the Strait of Hormuz, Iran dragged the global economy into the war launched by the U.S. and Israel.

Vacillating stance: Donald Trump announced the ceasefire hours after he threatened to erase the Iranian civilisation. REUTERS

Over the past few weeks, Mr. Trump repeatedly declared victory. But such declarations failed to convince even his allies, as the Strait of Hormuz remained under Iranian control. The U.S. had no easy options. Mr. Trump faced three possible ways out. First, he could declare victory and withdraw, effectively leaving the Strait in Iran's hands – a move that would be seen as a huge strategic defeat.

Second, he could escalate further, hoping that heavier strikes would force Iran to flinch and make concessions. But this carried enormous risks as Iran could counter-escalate by attacking energy facilities across the Gulf and militarily shutting the Strait. Such an outcome would multiply Mr. Trump's challenges and could draw the U.S. into a ground war. Mr. Trump did attempt limited escalation. He bombed Kharg Island, Iran's main export terminal, while Israel struck Iran's South Pars gas fields. Mr. Trump issued multiple ultimatums. But each time, Iran either ignored them or responded with counter-strikes. Last week, the loss of two aircraft over Iran punctured Mr. Trump's claims that Tehran's anti-defence capabilities were destroyed. Although the U.S. managed to extract the pilots of a downed F-15E, it lost more aircraft in the process.

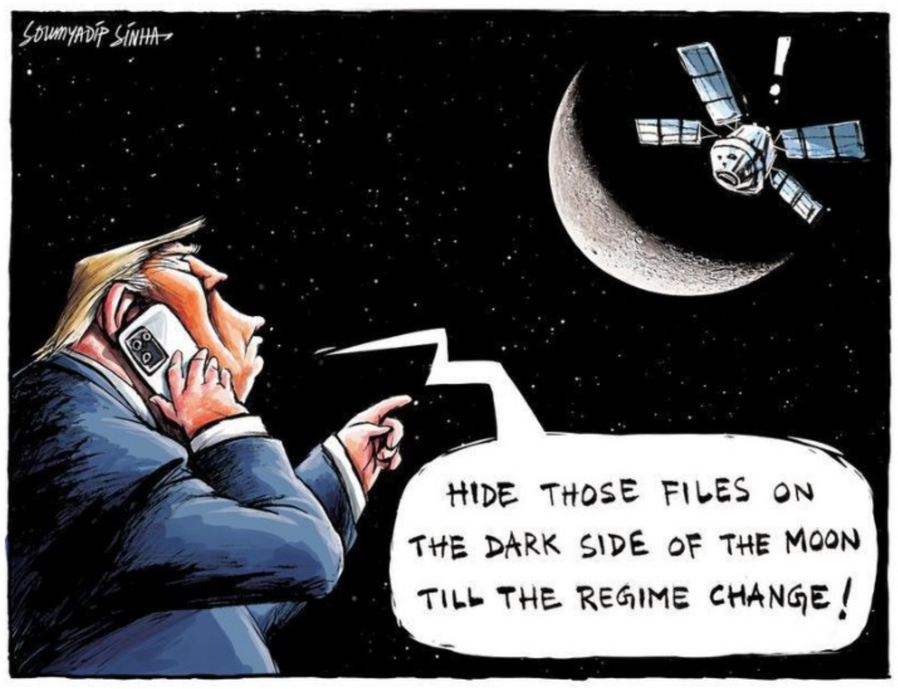
Mr. Trump's third option was to seek a deal with Iran, whose unconditional surrender he had demanded. He chose diplomacy, with Pakistan, an ally with close ties with Tehran, mediating, even as he threatened to blow up Iran's civilian infrastructure. The plan was to use the threats to exact concessions from Tehran for an exit path.

Tables have turned

He finally got an off-ramp, hours before his latest ultimatum was set to expire. But his admission that the framework for coming talks would be Iran's 10-point proposal, not America's 15-point proposal, shows how tables have turned during the war. Iran has demanded guarantees against future attacks, continued control over the Strait of Hormuz, right to continue enriching uranium, removal of all sanctions, withdrawal of U.S. troops in the region and payment of reparations. As a concession to Mr. Trump, Iran has agreed to allow "safe passage" of vessels through the Strait during the ceasefire "in coordination" with its forces. Note: 'safe passage' is not the same as 'free passage'.

There are wide gaps between the American and Iranian positions, which will be taken up at the Islamabad conference on April 10. But Iran will arrive with far greater leverage than it had in the pre-war talks in Muscat and Geneva. During the pre-war talks, the U.S. used the threat of an attack to demand concessions from Tehran. After 40 days of war, that threat is now a spent force.

On the draw



Over 100 killed as Israel strikes central Beirut

Associated Press
BEIRUT

Israeli strikes hit several commercial and residential areas in central Beirut without warning on Wednesday, hours after a ceasefire was announced in the U.S.-Israeli war with Iran.

Lebanon said at least 112 people were killed and hundreds were wounded in what was one of the deadliest days in the latest Israel-Hezbollah war.

U.S. President Donald Trump told *PBS News Hour* that Lebanon was not included in the deal because of the Lebanese militant Hezbollah group. When asked about Israel's latest strikes, he said, "That's a separate skirmish." Israel had said the agreement does not extend to its war with the Iran-backed Hezbollah, although mediator Pakistan said it does.

The fleeting sense of relief among Lebanese after the ceasefire announcement turned into panic with what Israel's military called its largest coordinated strike in the current war, hitting more than 100 Hezbollah targets within 10 minutes in Beirut, southern Lebanon and the eastern Bekaa Valley.

Black smoke towered over several parts of the seaside capital, where a huge number of people displaced by war have taken shelter. Explosions interrupted the honking of traffic on what had been a bustling, blue-sky afternoon. Ambulances raced toward open flames. Apartment buildings were struck.

Firefighters attempt to extinguish a fire following an Israeli strike at the Corniche al-Mazraa neighbourhood of Beirut on Wednesday. AFP

There was no sign of Hezbollah launching strikes against Israel in the first couple of hours after the attacks.

In response to the attacks on Lebanon, Iran later on Wednesday said it will once again halt the movement of oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz, the country's state-run media reported.

Central Beirut has been targeted before, but not by so many strikes at once and in the middle of the day.

Lebanon's Minister of Social Affairs, Haneed Sayed, condemned Israel's wide range of strikes, calling it a "very dangerous turning point".

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun called the Israeli attacks "barbaric". Lebanon's Health Ministry said that along with the 112 killed, at least 837 were wounded, warning that this is not the final count.

Europe welcomes truce, calls for Lebanon inclusion

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

European leaders welcomed the two-week ceasefire to the U.S.-Israel war on Iran, calling for a long-term negotiated settlement and the inclusion of Lebanon in the two-week ceasefire. The conflict had further weakened transatlantic ties, with Europe refusing to join U.S. President Donald Trump in offensive operations in Iran.

Ahead of a trip to West Asia on Wednesday, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer welcomed the ceasefire and said countries had to "turn it into a lasting agreement and reopen the Strait of Hormuz".

Britain and France have both sought to lead the political process to open the Strait after Mr. Trump lashed out at European countries last week for not supporting the U.S.-Israel war on Iran, and indicated the U.S. would not assist in keeping the Strait open.

The U.K. hosted a call last week – which Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri joined – to discuss diplomatic and political coordination on opening the Strait, through which a fifth of the world's oil passes. On Tuesday, as an evening deadline imposed by Mr. Trump to achieve a ceasefire approached, the U.K. Ministry of Defence led a military planning meeting on the subject.

Defiant Spain

"The Government of Spain will not applaud those who set the world ablaze just because they turn up with a bucket," the country's Prime Minster Pedro Sanchez wrote on X, presumably referring to the U.S. and Israel, the countries that started the war on February 28.

Positive turn: Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer speaks during an interaction at Taif Airbase in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday. AFP

While the U.K. had allowed U.S. aircraft to use its bases for defensive purposes (e.g. Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean) and France had permitted the use of a base for aircraft refuelling, Spain, also a NATO-ally of the U.S., had refused use of its bases and had closed its airspace to U.S. aircraft involved in the strikes.

"Ceasefires are always good news. Especially if they lead to a just and lasting peace. But momentary relief cannot make us forget the chaos, the destruction, and the lives lost," Mr. Sanchez wrote.

French President Emmanuel Macron welcomed the ceasefire during opening remarks at a security and defence meeting on Wednesday. A group of 15 countries led by France, and in coordination with Iran, would facilitate the resumption of shipping activity through the Strait of Hormuz, Mr. Macron said.

'Critical' situation

Mr. Macron also called for the ceasefire to include Lebanon. He described the situation as "critical". Israel has claimed the current two week-ceasefire does not include Lebanon – and its army has said it is conducting strikes against Iran-backed Hezbollah militants. Welcoming the ceasefire, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said the need was to negotiate a lasting solution. The British, French, Spanish and German leaders also joined others – the leaders of Canada, the Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, and the European Union – in issuing a joint statement urging "quick progress towards a substantive negotiated settlement" and thanking Pakistan and others for facilitating a ceasefire.

"Our Governments will contribute to ensuring freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz," the statement said.

A substantive settlement would be "crucial to protect the civilian population of Iran" and to ensure the security of the region and avert a global energy crisis, they said. The group of leaders also backed the idea of the ceasefire including Lebanon.

China visit to sow 'seeds of peace', says Taiwan leader Cheng

Agence France-Presse
NANJING

Taiwan's Opposition leader, a proponent of closer ties with Beijing, said on Wednesday she hoped to sow the "seeds of peace" during a rare visit to China.

Kuomintang (KMT) chairperson Cheng Li-wun is the party's first leader to visit China in a decade but her trip has sparked debate in Taiwan.

Critics, including those within her own party which traditionally supports relations with China, have accused her of being too pro-Beijing.

China claims self-ruled Taiwan is part of its territory and has threatened to use force to seize it.

Cheng Li-wun

"I hope that today we plant the seeds of peace not only for Chinese people on both sides of the Strait, but for all humankind," Ms. Cheng said on Wednesday, in comments broadcast by Taiwanese media.

MARKING HIS RUN-UP

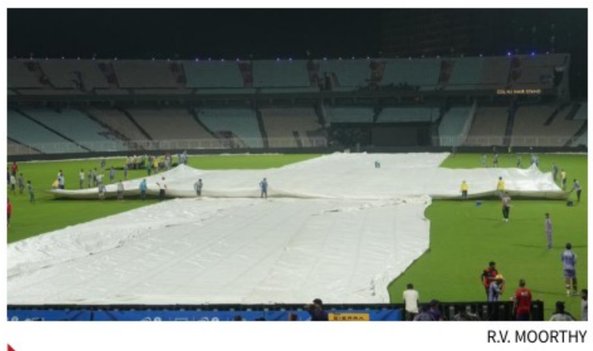
Cameron gets the green signal to start bowling for Knight Riders

REUTERS

Australian all-rounder Cameron Green may finally be seen bowling for Kolkata Knight Riders in IPL 2026 when the three-time champion faces Lucknow Super Giants in Kolkata on Thursday, providing a boost to its depleted bowling stock. On the eve of the match, Green spent over 30 minutes at the nets, bowling with full intent.

RAIN WOES

Inclement weather cuts short KKR and LSG practice sessions



R.V. MOORTHY

Kolkata Knight Riders and Lucknow Super Giants players had to wrap up their practice sessions much earlier than schedule due to rain and strong winds at Eden Gardens on Wednesday. After KKR's second IPL 2026 home match against Punjab Kings was washed out, the Ajinkya Rahane-led team will take on LSG on Thursday.

DEADLY COMBO

Jaiswal-Suryavanshi duo is the best going around, feels Parag

AP

Rajasthan Royals captain Riyan Parag described Yashasvi Jaiswal and Vaibhav Suryavanshi as "the best going around" and "number one" among opening pairs in IPL 2026. "They have got age on their side. Vaibhav is incredible and Jaiswal has been doing it for a few years now. They have the skills and maturity".

PLAYING IT SAFE

Santner rested against Royals as a precaution, reveals Jayawardene

PTI

Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene said that left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner was rested against Rajasthan Royals as a precaution. "Mitch had a niggle when he came off in the last game. So, it was a precaution; he wasn't 100% to play this game. But hopefully, he'll be fit for our next game," said Jayawardene.

Miller goes from hero to villain as Titans win thriller

The southpaw's decision to not take a run off the penultimate ball proves costly as DC suffers a one-run loss; Rahul's effort in vain; Gill, Buttler, Washington shine with the bat while Rashid scalps three

IPL-19

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

High tension permeated the cool air at the Arun Jaitley Stadium here on Wednesday as Delhi Capitals and Gujarat Titans engaged in a high-scoring cliffhanger in the Indian Premier League.

Twists and turns unfolded at breakneck speed, with Shubman Gill's Titans prevailing by one run in the end. In response to GT's 210 for four, DC finished on 209 for eight.

With two runs required off the final ball, David Miller swung hard at a short ball by Prasidh Krishna. But the southpaw failed to make contact, and as he and Kuldeep Yadav scampered for a single, the latter was found short at the striker's end after wicket-keeper Jos Buttler hit the stumps.

Off the penultimate ball, Miller had pulled Prasidh towards fine-leg and had an easy run on offer, but he chose to stay at his end and face the final delivery. The South African may rue that decision in hindsight.

For GT, leg-spinner Rashid Khan was sensational with figures of 4-0-17-3. Gill, Buttler and Washington Sundar also played their roles with fine half-centuries earlier in the evening. That DC came this close was down to K.L. Rahul's 92 and Miller's late heroics. The host appeared to have run out of steam with 36 runs to get off the last two overs and four wickets in hand. But Miller, having retired hurt at the start of the 14th over due to a hand injury before coming back in the 17th, hadn't resigned to that idea.

He walloped Mohammed Siraj for two sixes and a four in the penultimate over, whittling down the requirement to 13 off six balls. In a game where runs were aplenty, Rashid lent a decisive hand with crucial strikes.

The ace leggie had Nitish Rana caught at long-off, thanks to an excellent grab by B. Sai Sudharsan in the 10th over, and then cleaned up the in-form Sameer Rizvi with a masterful wrong 'un. A little later, Axar Patel became Rashid's third victim on the night. It eventually condemned DC to defeat by the narrowest of margins.

Show-stoppers: Gill returned to the side in style while Buttler and Rahul were back in form in a high-scoring game. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Cliffhanger: The Titans players kept their cool to post their first win of the season. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

SCOREBOARD

GUJARAT TITANS
B. Sai Sudharsan b Mukesh 12 *(7b, 2x4)*, Shubman Gill c Nitish Rana b Ngidi 70 *(45b, 4x4, 5x6)*, Jos Buttler b Kuldeep 52 *(27b, 3x4, 5x6)*, Washington Sundar c Nitish Rana b Mukesh 55 *(32b, 6x4, 2x6)*, Glenn Phillips (not out) 14 *(9b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Rahul Tewatia (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (nb-1, w-5): 6; Total (for four wkts. in 20 overs): 210.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-19 (Sai Sudharsan, 2.1 overs), 2-79 (Buttler, 7.3), 3-183 (Gill, 17.3), 4-205 (Washington, 19.3).

CAPITALS BOWLING
Mukesh 4-0-55-2, Ngidi 4-0-24-1, Axar 3-0-32-0, Kuldeep 4-0-42-1, Natarajan 4-0-34-0, Vipraj 1-0-23-0.

DELHI CAPITALS
Pathum Nissanka c Tewatia b Prasidh 41 *(24b, 6x4, 1x6)*, K.L. Rahul c Buttler b Siraj 92 *(52b, 11x4, 4x6)*, Nitish Rana c Sai Sudharsan b Rashid 5 *(6b, 1x4)*, Sameer Rizvi **(Impact Player for Mukesh)** b Rashid 0 *(1b)*, David Miller (not out) 41 *(19b, 3x4, 3x6)*, Axar Patel c Phillips b Rashid 2 *(3b)*, Tristan Stubbs run out 7 *(6b)*, Vipraj Nigam c Gill b Prasidh 12 *(7b, 2x4)*, Kuldeep Yadav run out 1 *(1b)*; Extras (w-8): 8; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 209.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-76 (Nissanka, 8.1), 2-101 (Nitish, 9.5), 3-101 (Rizvi, 9.6), 4-134 (Axar, 13.6), 5-160 (Stubbs, 16.4), 6-166 (Rahul, 16.6), 7-202 (Vipraj, 19.2), 8-209 (Kuldeep, 19.6).

TITANS BOWLING
Siraj 4-0-52-1, Rabada 4-0-32-0, Rashid 4-0-17-3, Ashok 3-0-45-0, Prasidh **(Impact Player for Shahrukh)** 4-0-52-2, Washington 1-0-11-0.

Toss: DC; **PoM:** Rashid.
Titans won by one run.

Next assignment

DC: April 11 vs. **CSK**
Chennai, 7.30 p.m.

GT: April 12 vs. **LSG**
Lucknow, 3.30 p.m.

Brevis hints he could play against DC

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Chennai Super Kings is likely to get a boost ahead of its next match against Delhi Capitals on April 11, with middle-order batter Dewald Brevis all set to be fit for the crucial fixture.

The South African batter hinted that he has recovered from a side strain during a sponsor event on Wednesday. "I can't wait to see you on the 11th, every match everywhere we play," he said when asked to give a message to the CSK fans.

Meanwhile, M.S. Dhoni, who is recovering from a calf strain in the city, is unlikely to feature on Saturday. The 44-year-old, though, trained in Chennai before the team's first home fixture against the Punjab Kings last week.

Brevis. R. RAGU

KKR eyes first victory as LSG comes calling

Y.B. Sarangi
KOLKATA

Three-time champion Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) has experienced its worst-ever start to an Indian Premier League (IPL) season after three matches and would like to record its first win in 2026 against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) at the Eden Gardens here on Thursday.

A season expected to pose a problem of plenty has turned out to be one with plenty of problems for the Ajinkya Rahane-led side, which is struggling to find the right bowling combination due to injuries to its key pacers and the lacklustre performance of its reliable spinners.

Without consistency in its batting, barring young Angkrish Raghuvanshi, KKR has found itself in a soup. Following two losses and a point from the washed-out match against Punjab Kings, KKR would look to overcome the odds.

Top wicket-taker Blessing Muzarabani should lead the attack with support from Vaibhav Arora and Kartik Tyagi. Sunil Narine, who recovered from his abdominal pain and trained on Wednesday, looked set to return, while there were doubts over an injured Varun Chakaravarthy.

In batting, Rahane, Finn Allen, and Rinku Singh need to shoulder the responsibility, while the team will be keen to see its Aussie import Cameron Green getting back his touch.

While KKR will be eager to get off the blocks, LSG, at its owner Sanjiv Goenka's home city, would like to carry forward its momentum after defeating Sunrisers Hyderabad.

LSG, studded with capable batters including captain Rishabh Pant, Aiden Markram, Mitchell Marsh, and Nicholas Pooran, will look to capitalise on KKR's unsettled attack.

A resurgent Mohammed Shami on his 'home' ground, the effective Prince Yadav, Mohsin Khan, Avesh Khan, wily spinner Digvesh Rathi, and another 'home' boy Shahbaz Ahmed are capable of disturbing any batting line-up.

With both sides hoping to outsmart each other, LSG is likely to enjoy some advantage because of its effective bowling.

Back in the mix: Narine is expected to return for KKR. R.V. MOORTHY

Today's match

KKR vs. LSG

Kolkata, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 6
KKR 2 | LSG 4

PREVIOUS MEETING
LSG won by four runs, 2025

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 & JIOHOTSTAR

I have benefitted from Bravo's inputs: Tyagi

Y.B. Sarangi
KOLKATA

Young Kolkata Knight Riders pacer Kartik Tyagi on Wednesday said he received a lot of help from team mentor Dwayne Bravo with regard to implementation of skills in match situations.

On the eve of KKR's match against Lucknow Super Giants, Tyagi said, "Everyone knows about one's skill set. Sometimes you make plans but when you are under pressure and you are playing after a long time, then you are not able to think properly. At such a time, when you have so much experience outside, that helps us a lot on the ground."

The 25-year-old said he was aware that several key pacers of KKR would not be available due to injuries and he might get chances to play. "Long before, everyone knew that Harshit (Rana) bhai was injured. And there was a scene of (Matheesha) Pathirana being injured. So we prepared (accordingly)."

Tyagi, who got a chance to play in the IPL after taking 11 wickets in the 2020 under-19 World Cup but struggled with fitness issues later, said he worked on his fitness and bowling.

"When I was in Sunrisers, Dale Steyn was there. I was having an injury-related problem. A shin splints issue was not getting sorted. I went to the physio, who has been with me from my under-16 days, and did the treatment. I had to fix everything so that I could become a better bowler," said Tyagi.

Points table

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Rajasthan Royals	3	3	0	0	6	2.403
Punjab Kings	3	2	0	1	5	0.637
Royal Challengers	2	2	0	0	4	2.501
Delhi Capitals	3	2	1	0	4	0.811
Sunrisers Hyderabad	3	1	2	0	2	0.275
Gujarat Titans	3	1	2	0	2	-0.270
Lucknow Super Giants	2	1	1	0	2	-0.542
Mumbai Indians	3	1	2	0	2	-0.715
Kolkata Knight Riders	3	0	2	1	1	-1.964
Chennai Super Kings	3	0	3	0	0	-2.517

Charged up: Shami will look to extend his good run. R.V MOORTHY

'Shami still trying to develop new skills'

Y.B. Sarangi
KOLKATA

Lucknow Super Giants spin-bowling coach Carl Crowe hailed seasoned pacer Mohammed Shami for his keenness to learn and improve.

Citing how Shami prepared with fast-bowling coach Bharat Arun to scalp dangerous Sunrisers Hyderabad opener Abhishek Sharma in LSG's last game, Crowe said, "Bharat and Shami worked on a new ball four days before the match, and Shami bowled that to dismiss Abhishek.

"You're never too old to learn a new skill. It's testament to not only Bharat but also Shami's mindset that as a senior player, he's still willing to develop new skills and trying to push (improve) his game."

Ahead of LSG's Indian Premier League encounter against Kolkata Knight Riders at Eden Gardens here, Crowe praised Rishabh Pant for being a bowlers' captain.

"Pant definitely empowers his bowlers. He is someone who is very keen to hear their views in team meetings. He's interested to see what their perspective is and what their plans are. When he enters the room as captain, he says 'hello' to every single person, shakes their hands. It makes you feel like you're welcome and you belong there," Crowe added.

Crowe spoke enthusiastically about spinner Digvesh Rathi. "He has an exciting skillset. He's capable of playing for India in the future. When you're working with those types of players, what you want to do is guide them rather than restrict them. It's clear that his energy and passion drive his game," said Crowe.

INBRIEF

Simeone hails 'exemplary' departing Griezmann

Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone hailed departing forward Antoine Griezmann. "I want to thank you for your work, your humility, and your exemplary attitude for all the kids, in a society that really needs people like you," Simeone told the forward. "Thank you for everything you've given us, everything you continue to give us... you're a player, but I also consider you a friend."

Silver for Nitesh, bronze for Sachin in Asian wrestling

Nitesh took a silver medal, while Sachin Sehrawat bagged a bronze in Greco-Roman competitions at the Asian wrestling championships in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on Wednesday. Nitesh lost 1-7 to Iranian Mohammadhadi Saravi in the 97kg final. Sehrawat defeated Uzbekistan's Abdumalik Aminov 6-5 to claim the 67kg bronze. Hansika Lamba (55kg) and Neha Sangwan (59kg) stayed in medal contention after making it to the women's bronze medal matches.

Indian archers do well in qualification

Ojas Deotale and Pragati took the top spots among Indian men and women respectively in the qualification round of the Archery World Cup Stage-1 in Puebla, Mexico. Overall, Deotale was 12th with 705 points. Pragati was sixth with 694 points. All four Indian male archers shot 700-plus scores.

The scores: Qualification round: Compound: Individual:
Men: Ojas Deotale (12th, 705), Abhishek Verma (16th, 702), Sahil Jadhav (18th, 701), Kushal Dalal (19th, 700).
Women: Pragati (sixth, 694), V. Jyothi Surekha (10th, 691), Madhura Dhamangaonkar (15th, 689), Aditi Swami (17th, 689).
Team: India: Men (first, 2108), Women (first, 2074), Mixed (fourth, 1399).

Indian youth TT teams off to a winning start

Indian girls stamped their authority with a 3-0 victory over Sri Lanka while the boys routed Maldives by a similar margin to begin their campaign on a winning note in the ITTF-ATTU Asian youth table tennis championships in Shimla on Wednesday. The u-19 girls remain the only category competing for qualification to the Asian youth championships.

The results: U-19: Girls: India bt Sri Lanka 3-0 (Jennifer Varghese bt Shamaisha 12-10, 11-8 11-9; Ananya Muralidharan bt Tamadi 11-7, 11-7, 12-10; Prisha Goel bt Sandin Mudiyanselage 8-11, 11-4, 11-5, 11-9).
U-15: Boys: India bt Maldives 3-0 (Aditya Das bt Mohamed Rafiu 11-3, 11-3, 11-2; Akshay Kirikara bt Faaz Latheef 11-2, 11-5, 11-2; Akash Rajavelu bt Ayoob Saleem 11-4, 11-6, 11-3).

HI names Indian women's squad for Argentina tour

Hockey India (HI) announced a 24-member women's squad for the tour of Argentina, scheduled from April 13 to 17, in Buenos Aires. The team will play four matches.

The squad: Goalkeepers: Savita, Bichu Devi; **Defenders:** Nikki Pradhan, Ishika Chaudhary, Sushila Chanu, Manisha Chauhan, Lalthantluangi, Jyoti, Udita; **Midfielders:** Vaishnavi Phalke, Sakshi Rana, Sunelita Toppo, Salima Tete, Neha, Deepika Soreng, Rutuja Pisal, Ishika; **Forwards:** Baljeet Kaur, Navneet Kaur, Deepika, Annu, Beauty Dungdung, Lalremsiami, Mumtaz Khan.
Matches on April 13, 14, 16, and 17 (7.30 p.m. IST).

Romanian football great Lucescu passes away

Mircea Lucescu, the Romanian football great who was a serial trophy winner both as a player and a coach, passed away aged 80. Lucescu's death was confirmed by Bucharest University Emergency Hospital on Tuesday. Lucescu captained his country at the 1970 World Cup. His coaching career spanned almost half-a-century, from late-1970s Romania to 2026 WC Qualifying.

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.
ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & FanCode, 7.30 p.m.
Conference League: Sony Sports Ten 1, 3 & LIV, 10.15 p.m. & 12.30 a.m. (Friday)
Golf: Augusta Masters, FanCode, 10.30 p.m.
Europa League: Sony Sports Ten 2, 5 & LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Friday)

Arsenal and Bayern Munich carry narrow edge into the return leg

A late Havertz strike allows the Gunners to snatch a last-gasp win at Sporting; the Bundesliga leader rues giving a life-line to Real Madrid

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Agence France-Presse
LISBON

Neatly done: Havertz bundles in Arsenal's winner from close range. REUTERS

Kai Havertz snatched a last-gasp winner as Arsenal bounced back from its domestic distress to steal a 1-0 victory at Sporting Lisbon in the Champions League quarterfinal first leg on Tuesday.

Once again, the Gunners were below their best but they emerged with the win thanks to David Raya's fine saves and Havertz's clinical finish in stoppage-time.

Arsenal will be firm favourites to advance to the semifinals in the second leg in north London on April 15, but it will have to improve significantly to win the tournament for the first time.

Arsenal struggled to find any momentum, but not for the first time this season it found a way to win ugly.

Arsenal has faced pointed questions about its perceived lack of mental strength. Grinding out the win in Lisbon was a suitable riposte to the critics.

Sporting went close to snatching a late goal when Luis Suarez's cross reached Catamo for a flicked header that Raya pushed away.

But Arsenal grabbed the winner in stoppage-time via Arteta's substitutes.

Gabriel Martinelli played a superb pass over the Sporting defence and Havertz beat the offside trap to slot past Silva from 10 yards as Arteta punched the air in delight.

Luis Diaz and Harry Kane scored the goals that gave dominant Bayern Munich a crucial 2-1 win away to Real Madrid.

Gripping battle

Kylian Mbappe's strike 16 minutes from time gave record 15-time winner Real a lifeline in a gripping battle. Vincent Kompany's side, arguably the strongest team in Europe this season, produced a masterclass in the first half and could have been several goals ahead.

Instead it had only one from Diaz, which Kane added to after the interval, but Mbappe's goal kept Alvaro Arbeloa's side in the tie.

"It's a shame it wasn't 2-0 at the end to be completely honest," said Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, who made several good saves in the second half as Real ramped up the pressure.

After nine consecutive matches against Real without a win, Bayern was determined to put an end to that streak and show why many consider it favourite to lift the trophy this season. Bayern toyed at times with Real, which ceded possession far too often.

The results (quarterfinal, first leg): Real Madrid 1 (Mbappe 74) lost to Bayern Munich 2 (Diaz 41, Kane 46); Sporting Lisbon 0 lost to Arsenal 1 (Havertz 90+1).

On target: Sibani scores her second goal off a penalty in the 87th minute. THE-AFC.COM

India beats Taiwan, stays in contention for knockout stage

FOOTBALL

Press Trust of India
PATHUM THANI (THAILAND)

The Indian under-20 women's team kept alive its hopes of qualifying for the AFC U-20 Women's Asian Cup 2026 knock-out stage, defeating Taiwan 3-1 in its final Group C match here on Wednesday.

Sibani Devi Nongmeikapam (32nd and 87th-penalty) scored two goals after Bhumika Devi Khumukcham (26th) gave the Young Tigresses the lead. Substitute Kao Hsin (90+3') pulled one back for Taiwan.

It was India's first win in the tournament since 2004.

India finished third in Group C with three points from as many matches.

If the Group B match between Jordan and Uzbekistan ends in a draw, India will qualify for the quarterfinals as one of the two best third-placed teams among all groups.

Doha Diamond League meet postponed to June 19

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

The Diamond League athletics meeting in Doha has been postponed for six weeks and will now take place on June 19, organisers announced Wednesday.

The Diamond League organisers had previously said the opening leg of this year's series would go ahead as planned on May 8, but have now decided to delay the event.

The competition will also be moved from the Qatar Sports Club to the Khalifa International Stadium in case of higher temperatures. Khalifa Stadium, which is temperature controlled, hosted the World Athletics Championships in 2019 and matches of the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

The first DL meeting will instead be in Shanghai on May 16.

Ayush stuns World No. 7 Feng; Sindhu advances

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
NINGBO (CHINA)

India's Ayush Shetty stunned world No. 7 Lin Shi Feng of China in straight games to enter the second round of the men's singles competition at the Badminton Asia Championships here on Wednesday.

World No. 25 Ayush, who had won the US Open Super 300 title last year, registered a 21-13, 21-16 victory in 51 minutes.

Feng raced to a 4-1 lead early on, but Ayush clawed back to level at 7-7 before gradually taking control to pocket the opening game.

After the change of sides, the Chinese again moved ahead 4-1 and extended it to 12-9, but Ayush turned the tide with a six-point burst to surge to 18-13.

Feng closed the gap to 16-18, but the Indian held his nerve to shut the door on his fancied opponent.

Impressive: Ayush got the better of his Chinese opponent in straight games. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

P.V. Sindhu defeated Malaysia's Wong Ling Ching in the women's singles 15-21, 21-11, 21-19 in 1 hour and seven minutes.

She will next face World No. 2 Wang Zhi Yi of China in the prequarterfinals both having 3-3 win-loss record in past meetups.

In men's singles, H.S. Prannoy beat Nguyen Hai Dang of Vietnam 24-22, 21-12 in 47 minutes.

He will meet Hong Yang of China in the prequarterfinals after the latter received a walkover in the opening round.

Lakshya Sen, Kidambi Srikanth, Malvika Bansod and Tanvi Sharma exited in the opening round.

The results: Men's singles (first round): Ayush Shetty bt Lin Shi Feng (Chn) 21-13, 21-16; H.S. Prannoy bt Wong Ling Ching (Mas) 15-21, 21-11, 21-19.
Women's singles (first round): P.V. Sindhu bt Wong Ling Ching (Mas) 15-21, 21-11, 21-19.

Going back to an old club is special: Westwood on his return to Bengaluru

ISL

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

Ashley Westwood doesn't distinctly remember the last time he was in the dugout at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium. "Would have been the final game of the season when we won," he tells *The Hindu*.

The 'we' here is Bengaluru FC, a club he helmed with distinction for three campaigns from 2013 to 2016, winning the erstwhile I-League twice and the Federation Cup once. It is the same club that he will return to this Saturday, albeit as the head coach of Kerala Blasters FC in the Indian Super League.

Westwood's final bow in the Garden City came exactly a decade ago, in April 2016, during a 2-1 win over Lao Toyota which sealed an AFC Cup round-of-16 berth. Funnily, Westwood was sent off in that match. Ten days earlier, in his final home fixture in the I-League, BFC had beaten Salgaocar FC 2-0 to clinch its second National crown in three seasons.

Westwood. THULASI KAKKAT

"Bengaluru is full of fond memories," Westwood says. "Winning the league is one and there was an open-top bus ride after that, which remains fresh. Christmas with the players, fancy dress, and then winning the league again in the third season.

"But what I remember the most is the 1-1 draw against Mohun Bagan in the final match of the second season... and losing the title. We could have won three out of three. I remember the disappointments more than the achievements, but success is always a fond memory."

> I am well aware of the rivalry between two of the biggest clubs in southern India. For me, though, it is about getting our fans to enjoy some good football
> **WESTWOOD**
> KBFC coach

When Westwood took over, BFC was brand new. It was his first full-time managerial job. But in three seasons, the club had become a benchmark - for both professionalism and achievement.

In fact, the Englishman's final game was the 3-2 away win over Hong Kong side Kitchee that helped earn a maiden AFC Cup quarterfinal slot. Five months later, under Spaniard Albert Roca, BFC reached the final, a first for an Indian club. "When we started, we didn't have much," Westwood recalls.

"We had a very small playing squad, and but for some signings like Sunil Chhetri and Robin Singh, the rest were those who couldn't get a club. The budget was also low. So growing a club from scratch is something that stands you in good stead."

At Blasters too he has to start from scratch, but only results-wise. After seven contests, the Kerala outfit is 13th in a 14-team ISL (one point) compared to BFC's fourth position (14). Nonetheless, BFC-Blasters remains one of the fiercest rivalries, and Westwood will experience this first hand.

"I am well aware of the rivalry between two of the biggest clubs in southern India. For me, though, it is about getting our fans to enjoy some good football, regardless of who we play. But going back to an old club is always special. I did that many times as a player. Now I am going to do that as a coach".

Commonwealth Sport team visits Gujarat

Press Trust of India
GANDHINAGAR

A delegation of Commonwealth Sport, led by Commonwealth Sport president Donald Rukare, began its four-day Gujarat visit on Wednesday to review preparations for the 2030 Commonwealth Games to be held in Ahmedabad.

During the four-day visit, the Commonwealth Sport delegation will inspect key venues proposed for the Games, including Veer Savarkar Sports Complex, Narendra Modi Stadium, EKA Arena in Ahmedabad, Vadodara Cricket Stadium, and the Statue of Unity at Ekta Nagar.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Centuries by Rafa and Prabhav

Rafa Poonacha (119) and Prabhav Pydah (100) starred for Max Muller against CCE in the Tiger Cup under-16 tournament here.
The scores: Kreeda Kshetra 325/7 in 30 overs (Tansh Krishna 86, Viaan Joshi 50, Vikram 42) bt South End 122 in 23.2 overs (Vikram 4/16).
Max Muller 348/2 in 29 overs (Rafa Poonacha 119, Prabhav Pydah 100, Athreya Bhat 63) bt CCE 113 in 22.3 overs.
RRCC 174/6 in 30 overs (Chetas 45, B.K. Samarth 42) bt Phoenix Rising Stars 164/7 in 30 overs (Sai 51).
Presidency 35 in 17 overs (Atharv Karadi 5/3) bt Play Smart 36 for no loss in 2.1 overs.

Ashco beats Bangalore Friends

Ashco HC defeated Bangalore Friends HC 4-2 in the KSHA 'B' division hockey league here on Wednesday.
The results: Ashco HC bt Bangalore Friends HC 4-2; Ideal Sports Academy drew with Garudda HC 4-4.

Queen's gambit: Vaishali capitalised on Divya's errors to pull off a win. FIDE

Vaishali beats Divya, remains in joint lead

CANDIDATES CHESS

Sports Bureau

In an engrossing all-Indian battle featuring two of the overnight leaders, R. Vaishali outclassed an erratic Divya Deshmukh at the FIDE Women's Candidates chess tournament at Pegeia, Cyprus, on Wednesday. The Grandmaster from Chennai has thus retained her lead after the ninth round.

The day had begun with five women in the lead, but it is now down to just two. Zhu Jiner is the other player on 5.5 points, following her win against Kateryna Lagno.

Anna Muzychuk is just half-a-point behind them, followed by Divya and Lagno on 4.5.

Five rounds remain in the eight-player double round-robin league.

Divya ran into some serious problems after making two poor moves, back to back, with her rook and knight. This gave a clear advantage to Vaishali, who finished with a flourish through a superb exchange sacrifice. Black resigned immediately.

▼ The day had begun with five women in the lead, but it is now down to just two.
Zhu Jiner is the other player on 5.5 points, following her win against Kateryna Lagno

In the open section, Anish Giri stunned second seed Fabiano Caruana to climb to second with 5.5 points, 1.5 behind the runaway leader Javokhir Sindarov, who drew with Matthias Bluebaum.

R. Praggnanandhaa failed to convert his better position against Wei Yi and split the point.

The results: Open: Fabiano Caruana (USA) 4.5 lost to Anish Giri (Ned) 5.5; R. Praggnanandhaa 4 drew with Wei Yi (Chn) 4; Matthias Bluebaum (Ger) 4 drew with Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb) 7; Hikaru Nakamura (USA) 4 drew with Andrey Esipenko (Rus) 3. **Women:** Tan Zhongyi (Chn) 3 drew with Anna Muzychuk (Ukr) 5; Zhu Jiner (Chn) 5.5 bt Kateryna Lagno (Rus) 4.5; Aleksandra Goryachkina (Rus) 4 drew with Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kaz) 4; R. Vaishali 5.5 bt Divya Deshmukh 4.5.

India rebounds to beat NZ for first win in BJK Cup

Young talents Vaishnavi and Sahaja register facile victories before the experienced Ankita and Rutuja complete the formalities to bring the smiles back after the loss against Thailand

TENNIS

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

Opening salvo: Vaishnavi's straight-set win put India on the road to victory. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

India rode on its young singles players to bounce back and win its second tie against New Zealand 3-0 to stay in contention for a top-two finish in the Billie Jean King Cup Asia/Oceania Group I and a spot in the Playoffs here on Wednesday despite rains threatening to play spoilsport.

After a disappointing 2-1 loss against Thailand in the opening tie that stretched across two days due to inclement weather, Vaishnavi Adkar and Sahaja Yamalapalli fought back, the latter within hours of her opening match, to give India a 2-0 lead at the DLTA Complex.

The experienced pair of Ankita Raina and Rutuja Bhosale then completed the formalities with a 6-4, 6-2 win against the fancied pair of Erin Routliffe and Monique Barry to be third on the table.

Taking charge

Vaishnavi, who was all over the place in the opening match on Tuesday, was far more in control of her shots and won 6-2, 6-4 against Aishi Das.

Clearly superior to her 18-year-old opponent ranked more than 700 places behind, Vaishnavi dominated with a more assured presence, relying on her accuracy and Aishi's inconsistency to race to a 6-2 win in the first set.

With the sun shining through, Vaishnavi was able to control the ball's speed much better and broke Aishi in the opening game, then in the fifth and seventh games to take the set. Aishi put up an improved performance in the second, fighting back from being 4-1 down to level 4-4 but Vaishnavi quickly regained control and served out the match when Aishi hit wide.

Sahaja, who only had 5.5 hours between her two matches, showed no signs of fatigue against Valentina Ivanov in her 6-1, 6-3 win in one hour 25 minutes.

Intelligently mixing her strokes and pushing Valentina hard to earn every point across the court, Sahaja added soft drops and volleys to her powerful returns from the baseline to stay in control.

Earlier, in the morning, India lost the opening tie against Thailand 2-1 after Patcharin Cheapchandej won her overnight match against Sahaja 6-4, 1-6, 6-4.

Ankita and Rutuja completed a consolation win against Thasaporn Naklo and Peangtarn Plipuech 6-3, 6-4.

In the other unfinished encounter from Tuesday, New Zealand's Monique Barry and Erin Routliffe got the better of Priska Madelyn Nugroho and Aldila Sutjiadi 4-6, 6-0, [10-6] but Indonesia won 2-1.

The results: India bt New Zealand 3-0 [Vaishnavi Adkar bt Aishi Das 6-2, 6-4; Sahaja Yamalapalli bt Valentina Ivanov 6-1, 6-3; Rutuja Bhosale & Ankita Raina bt Monique Barry & Erin Routliffe 6-4, 6-2].

Indonesia bt Mongolia 3-0 [Aldila Sutjiadi bt Anu-Vjin Gantor 6-0, 6-0; Anjali Kirana Junarto bt Khongorzul Aldarkhishig 6-2, 6-0; Anjali & Meydiana Laviola Reinnamah bt Jargal Altansarnai & Oyungerel Khasbaatar 6-0, 6-0].

Korea bt Thailand 3-0 [Dayeon Back bt Anchisa Chanta 6-3, 6-4; Sohyun Park bt Patcharin Cheapchandej 6-4, 6-1; Dayeon & Eunhye Lee bt Thasaporn Naklo & Kamonwan Yodpetch 6-4, 7-6(4)].

All green and ready: Precision will be at a premium with no rain in the forecast to soften the course. GETTY IMAGES

McIlroy chases Masters repeat at lightning-fast Augusta National

GOLF

Agence France-Presse
AUGUSTA

Rory McIlroy seeks a historic repeat victory starting Thursday at the 90th Masters, while World No. 1 Scottie Scheffler and Bryson DeChambeau lead a host of challengers in firm and fast conditions.

Second-ranked McIlroy completed a career Grand Slam by capturing the green jacket at Augusta National last year, but only Jack Nicklaus, Nick Faldo and Tiger Woods have won back-to-back green jackets, Woods the most recent in 2001-2002.

"Maybe not the largest field in golf but it's the strongest," McIlroy said. "I know I can do it now, so that should make it a little easier for me to go out and play the golf I want to play."

McIlroy suffered an injury scare last month when back pain prompted his withdrawal at Bay Hill. But he competed the following week and has rested since.

Scheffler, last year's British Open and PGA Championship winner, has failed in two Masters repeat bids.

"Defending can always be difficult, but I think that's mostly just the odds of winning a tournament in back-to-back years," Scheffler said. "That's just extremely challenging, especially when you look at major championships."

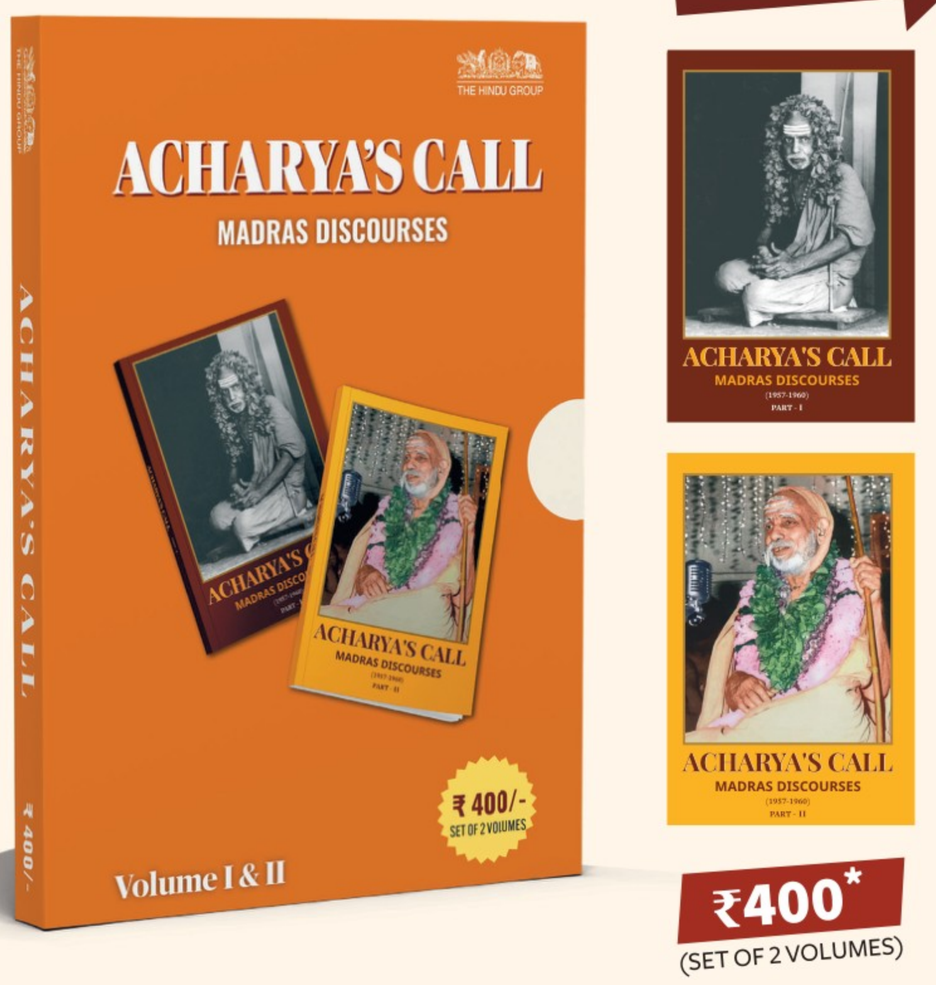
DeChambeau, who edged McIlroy for the 2024 US Open title, was in the final Sunday group last year at the Masters when the Northern Ireland star made history. "It's great if we can continue to have a rivalry," DeChambeau said.

Precision will be at a premium with no rain in the forecast to soften the course. Dustin Johnson, the 2020 Masters champion who holds the 72-hole Masters record score of 20-under par 268, is already seeing strong bounces on the course. Other contenders include world No. 3 Cameron Young, who won The Players Championship last month; England's Tommy Fleetwood, last year's Tour Championship winner, and England's Justin Rose, last year's Masters runner-up.

THE HINDU GROUP

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION
FROM THE HINDU GROUP

NEW ARRIVAL



₹400*
(SET OF 2 VOLUMES)

The Hindu presents *Acharya's Call*, a two-volume collection of the sermons by His Holiness Shri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathy Shankaracharya Swamigal, the revered Maha Periyava of Kanchi.

These speeches, delivered in Madras between 1957 and 1960, were originally reported in *The Hindu* and later published as books in 1968 and 1995.

The wide-ranging Madras discourses are now republished by *The Hindu*. The collection also includes a report of an interview granted by His Holiness to Hajime Nakamura, Professor of Indian Philosophy, Tokyo.

* Shipping Charges extra | Conditions apply.

THG BOOKS

scan QR code or visit publications.thehindugroup.com
For bulk booking and enquiries,
contact us at bookstore@thehindu.co.in or 1800 102 1878

For General Communication

Improve your accent, pronunciation and confidence with this highly interactive course.

A 6-week course offering you:

- **6 one-on-one Coach Calls:** On pronunciation, intonation, accent, followed by personalised feedback over 30 minutes
- **131 short self-learning webisodes:** 17+hour online learning content covering various aspects of speaking
- **1 unit per week covering:** Introducing yourself (Week 1) | Everyday English (Week 2) | Being formal (Week 3) | Socialising (Week 4) | Everyday transactions (Week 5) | Avoiding common grammatical errors (Week 6)

DON'T MISS THIS OFFER! ENROLL NOW!

Scan the QR code
Visit:
bit.ly/gencrash

STEP

VIT®
Vellore Institute of Technology
(Deemed to be University under section 3 of UGC Act, 1956)

QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS
BY SUBJECT 2026

CLIMBING GLOBAL RANKINGS

DELIVERING REAL IMPACT

Among Top 9 in India – Engineering & Technology

17 Subjects Ranked

India Rank	World Rank	Institution
1	36	IIT Delhi
2	42	IIT Bombay
3	62	IIT Madras
4	64	IIT Kharagpur
5	86	IIT Kanpur
6	**119**	**VIT**
7	129	IISc Bangalore
8	141	IIT Roorkee
9	166	IIT Guwahati

Source: https://www.topuniversities.com/universities/vellore-institute-technology-vit-vellore-india

Key Highlights (World Rankings)

Top 100

- Computer Science (India Rank # 6)
- EEE (India Rank # 6)

Top 150

- Mathematics (India Rank # 5)
- Materials Sciences (India Rank # 7)
- Mechanical (India Rank # 8)

Top 200

- Data Science & Artificial Intelligence (India Rank # 7)

Top 300

- Chemical (India Rank # 8)
- Civil (India Rank # 8)

Don't Miss Out -

VITEEE Registration Extended till 12th April 2026

Join India's Top-Ranked Private Engineering Institute

viteee.vit.ac.in

Scan QR To Apply